

RADIO PAESANI



**THE BEGINNING OF
COMMUNITY RADIO IN
SOUTH AUSTRALIA**



G. Geracitano

Cover Designed by Rosemarie Geracitano.

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Forward

History is not simply a record of what-really-happened-in-the-past; it is a complex intersection of truths, biases, and hope. When documenting the past, two quotes serve as guiding principles for analysis. The first is, 'History is written by winners,' a statement often attributed to Napoleon Bonaparte and echoed by figures like Winston Churchill. This quote suggests that history, as we know it, often reflects a selective collection of documents and memories crafted to support an underlying agenda, typically highlighting the contributions of those in power. The second quote is, 'Repeat a lie often enough, and it becomes the truth,' a propaganda principle commonly associated with Nazi Joseph Goebbels. Together, these quotes underscore the potential for historical narratives to be shaped, distorted, or manipulated.

While such an interpretation may lead to the cynical view that history is fundamentally based on lies, a more nuanced perspective acknowledges the need for critical analysis. Highlighting particular events and relying on selective documents can distort the past. Therefore, transparency in the sources used to write history is imperative. By declaring and analysing documents openly, we can strive for a more balanced and accurate account of the past.

My approach to analysing the history of the foundation of Italian Community Radio in South Australia is rooted in primary sources and firsthand accounts. These include in-depth interviews with key figures such as Keith Conlon, manager of the University of Adelaide radio station 5UV, which initiated community radio; *Rosa Colanero*, the inaugural program director of *Radio Paesani*; and *Lino Cardone*, sound technician for *Radio Paesani* in its formative years. Informal discussions were also held with *Nevis Mercurio* (née *Zancanaro*), *Alex Gardini*, Chairman of the Italian Education Movement (1974–1976), and *Gabriele Damiani*, the main announcer for *Radio Paesani* during its early years. Additionally, I consulted *Ilario Nesci's* autobiography, *La Mia Epopea*, and my own records, minutes, and notes as a member and, in 1977, Chairman, of the Italian Education Movement. Unfortunately, some pioneers could not be traced or had passed away, while others declined to participate or did not respond to requests.

The development of any organisation, while often associated with a charismatic or dominant leader, depends on the contributions of many unsung heroes. These individuals, akin to 'cogs in a wheel,' play indispensable roles in ensuring the success and sustainability of an organisation. This concept aptly applies to the foundation and growth of Italian Community Radio in South Australia.

I dedicate this short history to the pioneers who had the courage and resilience to embark on this venture, laying the foundation for what has become ethnic broadcasting in the twenty-first century. Their efforts have left an enduring legacy, enriching the cultural fabric of our community.

Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano
President

Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc. 2025

Radio Paesani

The Beginning of Community Radio in South Australia.

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Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc.

INTRODUCTION

The Italian Historical Society of South Australia (IHSSA), established in 2014, is dedicated to the collection, preservation, and celebration of the history of Italian migration to South Australia. Through its work, the IHSSA fosters an appreciation for Italian culture among descendants of Italian immigrants while documenting their profound contributions to the growth and development of the state. The Society aims to build a repository of primary sources, including oral histories, letters, photographs, and significant documents, which provide an invaluable resource for understanding the Italian migrant experience.

The IHSSA focuses primarily on collecting oral histories from first-generation migrants, capturing their unique, whole-of-life stories. These narratives cover life in Italy before migration, the motivations to emigrate, the voyage to Australia, the challenges and opportunities faced upon arrival, and the migrants' enduring impact on South Australian society. This approach ensures that the personal and cultural histories of Italian immigrants are preserved for their descendants and future generations of researchers. It also enriches the broader understanding of Australian immigration history by highlighting the resilience, adaptation, and achievements of this community.

The Society's flagship publication, *La Partenza: Voyage to a New Beginning*, showcases stories, research, and articles related to Italian migration. This journal is especially significant at a time when institutions like Flinders University have reduced their emphasis on the study of Italian migration. *La Partenza* serves as a critical platform to continue the scholarly exploration of Italian migration and its impact on South Australia, filling a gap left by the diminished academic focus on this subject.

IHSSA is unique in South Australia for its concentrated effort on documenting the history of Italian immigrants and their integration into local society. The project, "A Trunk Full of Dreams, A Suitcase Full of Memories," exemplifies this mission by preserving primary data for public access rather than restricting it to academic institutions. The Society also conducts targeted interviews with key individuals who have made significant contributions to various aspects of South Australian life, including business, culture, sport, and food.

One of the Society's most notable initiatives is its focus on Italian immigrants' influence on South Australian food culture. The project "A Tavola: The Influence of Italian Immigration on Australian Food Culture" examines how Italian migrants have shaped the culinary landscape of South Australia through restaurants, food manufacturing, wine production, and grocery retailing. By interviewing pioneers in these industries, the Society documents how the introduction of ingredients like olive oil and Italian wines, and the establishment of Italian restaurants and food businesses, transformed South Australia's food culture over the last 70 years.

IHSSA also explores broader contributions of the Italian community, including the establishment of Italian community radio and the pioneering roles of Italian women in various fields. Projects such as documenting the founding of Radio Paesani and interviews

with influential women like Rita Bianca Palumbo underscore the multifaceted contributions of Italian migrants to South Australia.

Led by President Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano, the IHSSA has grown into an integral institution for preserving Italian migrant history. Mr. Geracitano's expertise in multiculturalism, oral history methodology, and community engagement has been instrumental in driving the Society's success. The IHSSA collaborates closely with the State Library of South Australia and Migration Museum of South Australia, adhering to rigorous standards for collecting and preserving oral histories.

In conclusion, the IHSSA is a vital organisation that ensures the legacy of Italian immigrants in South Australia is celebrated and preserved. Its unique focus on documenting this history fills a critical gap in research, education, and cultural preservation, offering future generations invaluable insights into the lives and contributions of Italian migrants. The Society's work not only honours the past but also enriches the cultural fabric of South Australia, ensuring that these stories continue to inspire and inform for years to come, for these are the stories that have indeed shaped our lives and define who we are today.

All publications of the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Inc are stored in the State Library of South Australia and Migration Museum of South Australia, digital copies are available on request to the Society.

Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano
President
2025

The Foundation of Community Radio in South Australia & the Development of Italian Community Radio in South Australia.

The Beginning of Community Radio in South Australia

The 1970s was a period of social change in Australia. The previous twenty years of mass immigration and the influx of immigrants from Southern Europe had not only increased the Australian population but also changed it from a predominantly Anglo-Celtic country to a multi-ethnic community. It was a period that ushered in the Whitlam Government from the Labor Party at the federal level and Don Dunstan at the State level which facilitated social change and recognition of the ethnic complexity of the community.

Events in history seldom can be attributed to a single cause or develop in a linear direction. Often there are complex issues working parallel to each other which at some time, given the right environment, converge to make a lasting impact on the community. To fully understand how community radio, and ethnic community radio in particular, developed in South Australia one must examine the various factors at work.

In radio, and community radio in particular, major changes were taking place not only in Australia but also in Great Britain and the United States. In South Australia, to understand the introduction of community radio we need to go back to the 1960s when key people in the Department of Continuing Education in the University of Adelaide were really interested in using radio to broaden their reach. The aim of courses in the Department of Continuing Education was not to study for degrees or postgraduate studies but to do non-credit adult education. Radio was seen as a means of engaging a broader range of the community. This was an innovative and creative leap as there were not any such stations in Adelaide. At this stage the University did not have a radio station. The difficulty of developing a radio station was twofold, money and the availability of a government broadcasting license.

The first of these obstacles were overcome with a donation of \$100,000 by Kenneth Stirling, which enabled the university to establish a radio station. The university station was 5UV operating on the frequency 531 KHz. The second was much more complex because it involved navigating through a conservative government bureaucracy. The issue was that what the University was proposing could not be accommodated under any existing broadcasting licenses issued by either the Broadcasting Control Board or the Postmaster General Department which controlled commercial radio. The university was neither a commercial broadcaster nor part of the Australian Broadcasting Commission. To accommodate the university an experimental license was created which initially prohibited playing music. This occurred at a time when the Whitlam Government came to power with its social reform agenda. Interest in community radio was increasing throughout Australia. The result was that the University of Adelaide was granted an experimental license in 1974 on the condition that it had to allow community access to the radio station. 5UV was the first community radio station in Australia.

The University employed Keith Conlon in 1971 as Producer/Manager to implement their plan to develop the radio station. Keith Conlon was a graduate of Arts and Law and was employed as a tutor in the Law School on a part-time basis whilst working at 5AD in

current affairs radio. The condition that in order to have the experimental broadcasting license the station had to have community access fulfilled the aims of what the university and Keith Conlon had envisaged. The result was that in October 1974 the Department of Continuing Education held a community broadcasting seminar inviting community groups to discuss how community radio worked and how the community could become part of it. Prior to 1974 it was a legal requirement that only English could be used to transmit radio programmes. Non-English songs could be played but all announcements had to be made in English. There were several non-English music programmes both on commercial and government stations playing non-English songs. Both *Enzo Dobrilla* on 5AN (ABC) and *Marisa Baldassi* on 5KA transmitted programmes of Italian songs greeting the audience with *buongiorno* (good morning) or *buonasera* (good evening) but the rest of the program was in English. The 5KA programme was sponsored by Bialetti and Sons. Similarly, *Paul Kokke* transmitted a programme of Dutch music on 5KA. These were not ethnic community language programmes since no other language other than English could be spoken. In 1974 the Broadcasting Act was changed which allowed all languages to be broadcast on radio.

This occurred in the first half of the 1970s. Australia had gone from a predominantly homogenous Anglo-Celtic community to a multi-ethnic community. Immigrants that had been in Australia for twenty years were well established, no longer battling for survival, the children who had either immigrated when they were young or had been born in Australia were graduating from secondary schools and universities and no longer struggling with learning English. In all strata of Australian society young people from immigrant families were integrating, children of immigrants were becoming prominent in the professions, and the community was developing pride not only in maintaining their culture but also sharing it with the rest of the community. The changing structure of the community and the growing pride in the culture of ethnic communities were beginning to be recognised by both the Federal and State Governments. At the Federal level the appointment of Al Grassby as Immigration Minister established a communication conduit between the ethnic communities and the government, whilst at the State level Don Dunstan's election in 1967 and more importantly in 1970, ushered in a vast array of social reforms including al fresco dining, liberalisation of drinking laws, and the recognition of the value of ethnic contributions. Don Dunstan was the first Italian speaking Premier of South Australia having studied Italian at Perugia University for Foreigners.

In the Italian community clubs whether social, sport, or religious were being established and at universities the Italian Tertiary Students Association was a popular meeting avenue for students of Italian background. Also, for the subsequent development of Italian community radio, an Italian language department had been established with financial support from the Italian community at Flinders University in 1971. Furthermore, increasingly Italian language was being introduced in South Australian secondary schools, often staffed by either Italian speakers who were already on staff or newly graduates from Flinders University.

Within the Italian community, and the Italian Tertiary Students Association in particular, there was a growing realisation of the need to preserve the Italian language and culture. Many young people had been preoccupied with learning English and succeeding at their subjects to graduate from their course that they had little opportunity to maintain Italian language. In the professions many of Italian background were facing the prospect of dealing with first generation Italians unable to communicate in English on the part of the

client and Italian on the part of the professional. Teachers were being asked to teach Italian having no methodology or resources in teaching languages. The Italian course at Flinders University was predominantly based on language and literature and not on methodology to teach the language.

The Italian Education Movement.

At a meeting of the Italian Tertiary Students Association the growing need for the maintenance of Italian language led to the formation of the Italian Education Movement with the specific aim of developing strategies for the maintenance and promoting teaching of Italian. The group elected *Alex Gardini*, a lecturer in General Studies at the South Australian Institute of Technology, as Chairman; *Romano Rubichi*, who had immigrated from Italy as an adult and trained teacher and was deputy Principal at Cowandilla Primary School as Vice-President; *Rosa Matto*, an Arts Student studying to be a teacher as Secretary; *Rosa Colanero*, an Arts student studying to be a teacher; and Sara Kitto, a librarian at Brompton Primary School who was very interested in assisting students from non-English background to succeed as committee members. The aims of the Italian Education Movement resonated with many teachers of Italian and students of Italian background at the universities and Colleges of Advanced Education who were tasked to preparing students for teaching. Among the members of the Italian Education Movement was myself (*Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano*) who in 1974 was teaching Economics, Commerce, and History at Adelaide Boys High School and studying part-time for my Master of Education at the University of Adelaide. In 1975 I was appointed as Tutor and part-time lecturer in Sociology of Education at the University of Adelaide and developed an interest in research on multicultural education. This was my first foray to become an advocate for the Italian community. It began a journey which involved participating in the Italian Tertiary Students Association, the foundation of the South Australian Association of Teachers of Italian (SAATI), the Dante Alighieri Society of South Australia, the establishment of the Italian Cultural Centre Dante Alighieri, the foundation of the Coordinating Italian Committee, the foundation of Centro Didattico, the Italian Festival, the Italian Arts and Choral Society, the development of the Ethnic Affairs and Multicultural Commission, the foundation of the Migration Museum, and Ethnic Community Radio.

The primary function of the Italian Education Movement was the promotion and maintenance of Italian language and culture through its introduction in South Australian schools, including primary schools, and the development of a course to train teachers to teach it. Throughout the period 1974 to 1976 submissions were made to the Premier, and meetings were held between representatives of the Italian community and members of the Department of Education (Dr. John Mayfield, Superintendent of Secondary Schools and Jim Giles Superintendent of Primary Schools) which resulted in the introduction of Italian language and culture in selected primary schools and initiated a course to teach prospective teachers methodology for teaching Italian at Adelaide College of Advanced Education. A course for Interpreters and Translators was later added to the curriculum. To further assist teachers of Italian in 1975 the Italian Education Movement established the South Australian Association of Teachers of Italian (SAATI).

Rosa Colanero, an executive member of the Italian Education Movement, was a neighbour of Keith Conlon and often he would offer her a ride to university. During the trip *Rosa* and Keith would discuss the plans to introduce community radio at the university. At that stage

Rosa was volunteering at 5UV. Keith expressed his interest in inviting the ethnic communities to become part of community broadcasting and suggested to Rosa to canvass interest within the Italian community. Rosa, as an executive member of the Italian Education Movement, reported to the committee her discussions with Keith Conlon and suggested that the Movement should investigate the feasibility of joining the 5UV proposal.

Establishment of Ethnic Community Radio.

The community broadcasting seminar held by 5UV attracted a strong response from the ethnic communities, each eager to have an outlet for their own programmes.

The Italian community was represented by three attendees: *Alex Gardini*, Chairman of the Italian Education Movement; *Rosa Colanero*, member of the executive of the Italian Education Movement; and *Ilario Nesci*. The three attendees represented a wide range of backgrounds. *Alex Gardini* was a lecturer in the Department of General Studies at the South Australian Institute of Technology (now University of South Australia). He immigrated with his family to Australia when he was ten years old as a refugee from *Fiume* in the 1950s. In many ways he was in search of his own identity but was increasingly getting involved in the community and mentored by *Dr George Smolicz*, a Reader in Education teaching Sociology of Education in the Diploma of Education at the University of Adelaide and conducting research in multicultural education. *Rosa Colanero* was a student at the University of Adelaide studying for her Diploma of Education, who had immigrated with her family from Abruzzo. Rosa's initial interest was journalism but since there was little opportunity for employment, especially for a woman, in Adelaide she decided to study Arts and train as a teacher. The third, *Ilario Nesci*, came from a very different background, he was a bus driver who regarded himself as the 'odd man out'. *Ilario Nesci* had always aspired to study but due to his health condition and lack of opportunity was not able to continue with his studies, however, the internal flame and thirst for knowledge drove him on. He had written a proposal of how to teach English to immigrants and when he found little response from the authorities had sent a copy to the University of Adelaide. His name and address had come to the attention of the Department of Continuing Education at the University of Adelaide, and he was invited to attend the community radio seminar.

It was a condition that in order to participate and transmit programmes the community had to be represented. It was community access and hence programmes had to emanate from the community rather than an individual. Five community groups: Italian, Dutch, Polish, Ukrainian and Greek were ready to start. The meeting at the community radio conference was the birth of ethnic community radio and that nucleus formed the foundation of Ethnic Broadcasters Incorporated (formal incorporation in 1978). It was also the birth of *Radio Paesani* with *Rosa Colanero* given the task of organising the programme.

On Monday the 3rd of March 1975 at 6:00 pm the first non-English community radio programme was broadcasted from the studios of 5UV. Due to programming arrangements the Italian programme was first on air and the first in Australia. The first voice to be heard on the programme was *Enzo Dobrilla*. It was followed by the Dutch family programme on Wednesday 5th March, and then the Ukrainian on Saturday 8th March. Shortly afterwards the Polish and Greek started their programmes. More groups joined and by the end of 1977 twenty-six groups were transmitting from 5UV, taking up almost half of the broadcasting

time. The transmission by *Radio Paesani* was the first transmission of ethnic radio not only in Adelaide but also in Australia as the other states began their transmissions much later. SBS was created in November 1977 by an amendment to the Broadcasting and Television Act 1942 to manage the government's ethnic broadcasting projects.

Radio Paesani

Having received the approval of the Italian Education Movement and the establishment of community radio at 5UV, *Rosa Colanero* formed a group of interested people to organise a brief and plan the radio programme. A number of people had already indicated an interest in the programme. Besides *Rosa Colanero*, these included: *Rosa Matto*, University student studying to be a teacher; *Rosanna Caporale*, student at University of Adelaide studying to be a teacher; *Nives Zancanaro*, teacher of Italian at Siena College; Sara Kitto, librarian; *Enzo Dobrilla*; and *Ilario Nesci*. The popular narrative that *Radio Paesani* was founded by a group of students at the University of Adelaide is only partly true but it fails to acknowledge the complexity of its foundation and devalues the input of all the non-students.

The Italian Education Movement role, apart from acting as an umbrella organisation, was negligible in planning and transmitting the programmes. The group led by *Rosa Colanero* was a sub-committee and responsible for the programme. The Chairmen of the Italian Education Movement became a defacto President of the radio. This organisational structure remained until the end of 1977 when the radio unilaterally broke away from the Italian Education Movement.

The radio group as soon as the green light was given by 5UV began planning programmes to be transmitted even though transmission did not start until 1975. In preparing the programmes it was important to include an educational component which was the brief of the Department of Continuing Education. What became apparent from the start was that there was a dearth of resources. The group decided to start with the regions of Italy to initiate the programmes. The first region to be broadcasted was *Abruzzo* since it started with the letter 'A' and both *Rosa Colanero* and *Rosanna Caporale* were *Abruzzesi* and had material that they could use. Whilst they were preparing the programmes on *Abruzzo*, other members of the group were preparing programmes on other regions and sought assistance to research information on those regions. *Rosa Matto* sought assistance from *Giovanni Di Sessa* to organise the programme on *Campania*, whilst *Gabriele Damiani* helped with the *Marche* programme. Since the programmes were based on regions of Italy it was decided to call the transmission *Paesani*. Eventually programming was assisted by the availability of tapes prepared by RAI International (*Radiotelevisione Italiana*) and segments could be inserted into programmes transmitted by *Radio Paesani*.

The structure of the programme was based on information on the region and immigrants in South Australia who came from that region, songs of the region, and recipes of dishes from the region. A segment was devoted to '*Aiuto*' (help) which sought to give useful information to Italian immigrants. From the start the group was hampered by the lack of resources. Records were borrowed from *Alfa Emporium*, a store that sold Italian records, books et cetera on the condition that the records were returned undamaged since they had to be sold. As the programme began to gain listeners requests were made to play certain songs. By 1975 when the first programme went to air four programmes were ready to be broadcasted.

Programmes were pre-recorded as required by 5UV. The tapes were delivered to 5UV which checked them to ensure that the recordings were suitable for transmission. All recordings were done away from the studio since each studio session would cost \$20.00. Initially programmes were recorded at home using a reel-to-reel tape recorder. This continued until *Alex Gardini* sought the help of *Lino Cardone*, who at the time was studying engineering at the South Australian Institute of Technology and was employed part-time to take care of the tapes in the Language Laboratory. The result was that *Lino Cardone* became the technician, and programmes were prepared in the Language Laboratory. He continued as technician until 1979 when he left to go overseas. There were two occasions when the programme was transmitted live. The first was an interview with *Gianni Morandi* who arrived late to be pre-recorded due to the plane being delayed. The second occasion the tapes which had been delivered to 5UV had gone missing and so the programme was transmitted live.

The other issue that the group faced was fluency with spoken Italian. *Enzo Dobrilla* had been in Australia for a while and even though *Nives Zancanaro* would write the script words were often mispronounced. The others either had immigrated as young children or were born in Australia, as was the case with *Rosa Matto*, and even though they had maintained their language and Italian was spoken at home, they weren't native speakers. Initially the only fluent Italian speaker on the team was *Ilario Nesci*. Often this led to heated discussions with the executive members of the Italian Education Movement, especially *Romano Rubichi* who demanded that all tapes be approved by him before they went to air. This requirement was impractical. The matter resolved itself when in 1975 *Gabriele Damiani*, a hairdresser who had immigrated from Italy as an adult and was a fluent Italian speaker joined the programme and eventually became the main announcer and the voice of *Radio Paesani*. Once the programme was initiated other interested people would wander in the studio and began to assist with the programme. People such as *Giovanni Di Sessa*, dr. *Massimo Buonaiuto*, *Enzo Sodarini*, all fluent Italian speakers. These were further joined in 1976 by *Claudia De Biase*, *Sergio Ubaldi*, and *Vivian Arboit*.

The group also faced financial difficulties. There were no subscriptions to the radio. Donations were made at random. This was later alleviated as Italian community clubs began to sponsor programmes.

A positive outcome of the radio is that the community finally had a voice. For the first time the community learnt of what was happening. Many Italian clubs were assisted in their development by having their activities advertised. Very early in the life of the radio reports of activities by community clubs were presented in the programmes. The first of these was a report of a concert held on the 9th of July 1975 by the Italian Choral and Arts Society at Woodville Town Hall. Similarly reports of concerts held by the Italian students at Flinders University organised by Professor *Tony Comin*, were made public. The success of the First National Italian Festival held in 1976 can be largely attributed to the publicity that *Radio Paesani* transmitted. The Inter Italian Social Club of Adelaide Inc. was the first club to regularly sponsor a programme on the radio paying \$60.00 per hour. The other benefit to the community was the flow of information and social assistance offered by regular guests such as *Guido Cavalin* who was employed by the Woodville Council (City of Charles Sturt) as an Italian bi-lingual information officer.

Gradually the number of hours available to *Radio Paesani* increased and by 1977 six hours of transmission offered it the opportunity to diversify the range of programmes.

By the end of 1976 *Radio Paesani* was established and had gained the support of the community and *dr. Rubens Fedele*, the Consul of Italy. However, the fact that the radio was convened by a young woman caused problems among a male dominated Italian community. *Rosa Colanero* recalls an incident when the President of the Sicilia Social and Sports Club went for a meeting at her house and on arriving looked around and asked if there was anyone else coming, and when no one else arrived, he left without discussing what he had come to discuss. Community clubs in the 1970s were mostly managed by males and many were still of the opinion that a woman's place was in the home. Similarly, within the radio group there was some resistance to a woman heading the group. The issues were resolved at the end of 1976 when *Rosa Colanero* resigned from the radio to go to Italy, having received a scholarship to study at *La Sapienza* [*La Sapienza* University of Rome]. In 1977 *Sergio Ubaldi* was elected to lead *Radio Paesani*. Overall, despite difference of opinions decisions on programmes were made co-operatively and no one personality dominated the radio. From 1977 relationships within the radio group and between the radio and the Italian Education Movement began to change.

By the end of 1976 the core aims of the Italian Education Movement had been met. In October 1975 SAATI was founded to support teachers of Italian and many members of the Italian Education Movement who were teachers became members of SAATI. The South Australian Department of Education had agreed to introduce Italian in selected primary schools, and plans had been made to initiate a course to train teachers in methodology of teaching Italian at Adelaide College of Advanced Education. *Romano Rubichi* was appointed to develop the course at Adelaide College of Advance Education. *Alex Gardini* was appointed to the newly created Ethnic Affairs Unit in the Department of the Premier at the end of 1976. Only a small group remained who saw benefits of continuing with the Italian Education Movement and to concentrate its activities within the broad framework of promoting Italian language and culture.

The end of Radio Paesani & the establishment of Radio Italiana.

In 1977 *Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano* assumed the role of Chairman of the Italian Education Movement and together with *dr. Massimo Buonaiuto*, turned their attention to advocate for the recognition of overseas qualifications and the establishment of standards and accreditation for interpreters and translators. At the time plans were being discussed for the formation of the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI). This body would be responsible to establish standards and issue accreditation for translators and Interpreters.

The other responsibility of the Italian Education Movement was the operation of *Radio Paesani*. There were two issues to resolve: programming and operation of the radio; and the continual development of Ethnic Broadcasters Incorporate (EBI) which was still un-incorporated. The prevailing method of operation was that the Chairman of the Italian Education Movement, although having overall responsibility for *Radio Paesani* and was de facto President of the radio, did not get involved in the operation of the radio. The announcers of the radio elected their own programme director and manage their programmes. The Chairman role was more that of an overseer and would at times get involved in developing policy for ethnic radio in general. This protocol was followed in 1977 with the change of leadership both in the Italian Education Movement and *Radio Paesani*. Therefore, *Sergio Ubaldi*, having been elected as programme director, was entrusted with the daily operation of the radio, and the Chairman of the Italian Education Movement dealt with issues of developing EBI.

In June 1977 *Giovanni Di Sessa* approached the Chairman of the Italian Education Movement with a proposal to establish the radio as a separate entity. The meeting was also attended by *dr. Massimo Buonaiuto* from the Italian Education Movement. The argument used was that the Italian Education Movement was not a community representative body and that the radio represented the community. There were two issues involved: *Di Sessa* was not at that stage the programme director and had no role in the radio apart from being an announcer, and reports were circulating of disharmony and intimidation within the radio group in an attempt to change the leadership of the radio.

The plan of the Italian Education Movement was to eventually make *Radio Paesani* an independent organisation like SAATI which was created to support teachers of Italian. This was to be implemented once EBI was fully established as an incorporated body and only after consultation with the radio group to ensure transparency in the election of a radio executive. By 1977 there were 26 announcers in the group and it was important that all of them had a say as to how the new organisation was going to operate.

Discussions between *Di Sessa* and the Chairman and *dr. Massimo Buonaiuto* of the Italian Education Movement continued but there was no agreement as to how the separation between the two organisations was going to be implemented. The basic argument was that neither organisation had been elected by the community and therefore neither could claim the high moral ground. In order to bolster his position *Di Sessa* enlisted the support of *Luigi Penna*, a lawyer, and both would attend meetings to discuss the separation of the two organisations. Neither party would concede and by the end of 1977 *Radio Paesani* unilaterally separated from the Italian Education Movement and reported to EBI that they were now the representatives of the Italian community. The Italian Education Movement could have challenged the movement but chose not to fight since it did not want to embroil the community in a conflict which would ultimately split the community and damage the radio, and it had planned a separation of the two organisations even though it did not happen in the orderly manner in which it planned.

On the 17th of December 1978 a new constitution was voted on by members of the radio group which established *Radio Italiana* with *Luigi Penna* as its first president. Effectively this was the end of *Radio Paesani*.

On her return from her studies in Italy *Rosa Colanero* met with *Di Sessa* who had requested the meeting. *Di Sessa* requested information about the beginning of the radio stating that he was interested in writing a history of the radio. *Colanero* handed to *Di Sessa* original documents, notes, and flyers that were produced in the early years of the radio. Photocopying in those days was not as common as it is now. Unfortunately, none of these documents were ever returned to *Colanero* and when *Di Sessa* finally did write a history of the radio the only reference he made to the establishment of the radio is that a group of students from the University of Adelaide started the radio and then he and *Penna* established *Radio Italiana*. This distorted view of the history of Italian Community Radio has persisted and led to many arguments as to who was the founder of the radio.

All participants in *Radio Paesani* were volunteers, no payments were made to anyone.

Conclusion

The establishment of Italian Community Radio in South Australia was the result of multiple factors converging at the right time. Changes in broadcasting regulations, the foundation of community radio, and the advocacy of individuals and organisations all played crucial roles in its development. While many people contributed to its growth, it is essential to recognise the vision, determination, and resilience of those who initiated and supported the project in its formative years.

The success of Italian Community Radio was not the work of a single individual but rather a collective effort involving administrators, broadcasters, technicians, and volunteers who dedicated their time and expertise. Their contributions helped create a lasting platform for cultural expression, information sharing, and community engagement.

Among those whose contributions were pivotal are *Rosa Colanero*, who acted as the catalyst and first programme director, and early pioneers such as *Rosa Matto*, *Nives Zancanaro*, *Rosanna Caporale*, and *Enzo Dobrilla*. Additionally, *Gabriele Damiani*'s long-standing role as the voice of *Radio Paesani*, along with the contributions of *Ilario Nesci*, *Giuseppe Cavuoto*, *Sergio Ubaldi*, *Vicenzina Ciccarello*, *Vivian Arboit*, *Claudia Di Biase*, and *Giovanni Di Sessa*, was instrumental in its ongoing development.

Recognition should also be given to *Lino Cardone*, who served for many years as the technician. The administrators and de facto leaders of *Radio Paesani*, including the chairmen of the Italian Education Movement, *Alex Gardini*, and *Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano*, also played a crucial role in facilitating the station's success.

These pioneers were followed by many others who, over the years, have contributed to and shaped the ongoing development of Italian Community Radio. Their efforts should also be documented so that history does not forget them.

History is often shaped by omissions and selective retellings, sometimes diminishing the contributions of one group to elevate another perspective. Unfortunately, the Italian community has been prone to historical revisions, a tendency made easier by the absence of firsthand documents.

This is why Oral History methodology is invaluable in preserving an accurate record of the past. Some may argue that memories are subjective, but when corroborated by multiple sources and the available documents, they become undeniable pieces of historical truth.

Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano

2025



Dialectically speaking Enzo's OK. PRESENTING a radio program in Italian has its pitfalls. There are some 20 regional dialects and the man at the microphone has to be fluent in each. ABC-TV Adelaide Presentation Assistant Enzo Dobrilla who hosts the Italian language program Paesani (countrymen) on Adelaide University Radio 5UV manages all 20 although he does admit to getting stuck for a word or two at times with some dialects



Gianni Morandi At Radio Paesani

Radio 'awakens' SA Italian Community

By Michele Howell-Price - 29th May 1975. The Advertiser.

Members of Adelaide's Italian community are undergoing a "slow awakening" through an ambitious radio programme on VL 5UV.

The one-hour programme on University of Adelaide radio was started by the Italian Education Movement in March to foster Italian culture, to give the Italian community news from the homeland and to help members with their problems. The programme, which is broadcast in Italian is the idea of 23-year-old Rosetta Colanero an Italian teacher and producer of the programme.

She, and a floating population of interested students and teachers, research and compile each episode. "We are doing a regional study at the moment," Miss Colanero said. Each week we centre in a specific region and look at its culture, geography, folklore, music and recipe's. "There are 20 regions in Italy and so far, we have covered eight."

She said a 10-minute section of the programme called "help" has been included to help Italian migrants with their problems.

It consists of an interview with a professional person and has included a teacher, doctor, psychologist and a tax expert. They discuss problems most common in Italian communities. "We hope to extend this section to occupy half the programme" Miss Colanero said.

"The response to the programme has been really good" Miss Colanero said the programme was needed by both younger and older Italians. It helped younger members who were being brought up as English-speaking Australians to appreciate the culture of their Parents country.

This could reduce family breakdowns resulting from lack of understanding between parents and children of different cultures.

"It is also a bit of nostalgia for the older ones." Miss Colanero said Since its inception other groups Dutch, Ukrainian and Polish have started similar programmes, and the Greek community is considering one.

The Programme is broadcast on Monday between 6pm and 7 pm



Radio awakens South Australia Italian Community

COMMUNITY RADIO AND THE BIRTH OF ITALIAN COMMUNITY RADIO IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

RADIO PAESANI

TIMELINE

- 1960S** University of Adelaide Department of Continuing Education interest in Developing community radio to broaden its range Of Educational Programmes.
- 1970** University of Adelaide received a bequest of \$100,000 from Kenneth Stirling to establish an educational community radio station.
- 1971** Keith Conlon appointed Producer/Manager of 5UV.
- 1972** Newly created station 5UV granted a special one-off license to broadcast educational programmes but no music.
- On 12th June 1972 5UV radio station began broadcasting in small rooms under the former Hughes Plaza, now Hub Central, on the University of Adelaide Campus.
- 1974** Foundation of the Italian Education Movement. *Alex Gardini* Chairman, *Romano Rubichi* Vice-Chairman, *Rosa Matto* Secretary, *Rosa Colanero* committee member.
- Radio station 5UV granted a 'public radio' license on the condition that it would be accessible by the public. 5UV first community radio station in Australia.

October 1974 Community radio seminar held at the University of Adelaide. Representing the Italian community, *Alex Gardini, Rosa Colanero, and Ilario Nesci attended*. Five ethnic communities ready to launch radio programmes: Italian, Dutch, Polish, Ukraine, and Greek.

Rosa Colanero appointed programme director of Italian radio programme.

Chairman of the Italian Education Movement becomes President of Italian Community radio station.

1975

Monday the 3rd of March first non-English community radio programme broadcasted from 5UV. Due to programming schedules, Italian programme first on. First voice on Italian community radio *Enzo Dobrilla*. *Radio Paesani* was born.

Gabriele Damiani joins *Radio Paesani* and becomes the main announcer.

July 1975 first report of activities by Italian community organization. Report of concert by the Italian Choral and Arts Society at Woodville Town Hall held on the 9th of July 1975.

Inter Italian Social Club of Adelaide first Italian community club to sponsor a programme on *Radio Paesani*, paying \$60.00 per hour.

Interview with *Gianni Morandi* was held live due to the plane being late.

October 1975 Italian Education Movement forms the South Australian Association of Teachers of Italian (SAATI) to support teachers teaching Italian.

- 1976** Meeting of representatives of the Italian community and the Department of Education (Dr John Mayfield, Superintendent of secondary schools and Jim Giles, Superintendent of primary schools). Agreement that Italian language and culture be introduced in selected primary schools.
- 1976 (End of Year)** *Romano Rubichi* appointed to develop course of methodology of teaching Italian at Adelaide College of Advanced Education for prospective teachers of Italian.
- September 1976 First National Italian Festival held in South Australia. Festival attractions are heavily advertised by *Radio Paesani*.
- Alex Gardini* was appointed to the newly created Ethnic Affairs Unit in the Department of the Premier.
- Rosa Colanero* resigns from *Radio Paesani* to go to Italy on her scholarship at *La Sapienza* University of Rome.
- 1977** *Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano* appointed Chairman of the Italian Education Movement and with dr. *Massimo Buonaiuto* advocate for recognition of overseas qualifications and the establishments of standards and certification of translators and interpreters. Creation of the National Accreditation Authority for translators and Interpreters (NAATI).
- Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano* as Chairman of the Italian Education Movement becomes President of *Radio Paesani*.
- Sergio Ubaldi* was elected Programme Director of *Radio Paesani*.

June 1977 *Giovanni Di Sessa* requests meeting with Chairman of Italian Education Movement seeking separation of *Radio Paesani* from the Italian Education Movement. Meeting attended by *dr. Massino Buonaiuto*. No agreement was reached.

Meetings held between July and November 1977 with *Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano* and *dr. Massimo Buonaiuto* on behalf of the Italian Education Movement and *Giovanni Di Sessa* and *Luigi Penna* on behalf of *Radio Paesani* to arrange the separation of the two organizations. No agreement was reached.

End of 1977 *Radio Paesani* unilaterally departs from the Italian Education Movement. End of *Radio Paesani*.

November 1977 SBS created by an amendment to the Broadcasting and Television Act 1942 to manage the government's ethnic broadcasting projects.

1978

Giovanni Di Sessa replaces *Sergio Ubaldi* as Programme Director

17th December 1978 a new constitution voted on by members of Italian radio establishing *Radio Italiana* with *Luigi Penna* as its first President

ITALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC.

TRANSCRIPT NOTES

The transcript is verbatim of the interview. Grammar has not been corrected; punctuation has been added by the transcriber.

The transcriber has deleted repeated words unless they are used to emphasize a point, also words as 'ahs', 'hmmm..', and so on have been omitted.

Non-English words whether they refer to names, places, or phrases used are in italics.

All non-English phrases are translated into English and are in square brackets.

Where explanations are needed the interviewer's notes are in square brackets.

Punctuation:

Single dashes are used to indicate pauses within a sentence.

Three dashes are used to indicate unfinished sentences that are a normal part of conversational speech.

Round brackets are used to indicate emotions and actions.

Square brackets are used to indicate words and information not on the recording but inserted for clarification.

The Interviewer and Interviewee are identified with their initials.

For the Keith Conlon Interview initials used:

GG – Giuseppe Geracitano (Interviewer)

KC – Keith Conlon (Interviewee)

For the Rosa Colanero:

Only excerpts which are relevant to the foundation of Italian Community Radio are reported in this transcript. Initials used:

GG – Giuseppe Geracitano (Interviewer)

RC – Rosa Colanero (Interviewee)

For the Lino Cardone transcript, initial used:

GG – Giuseppe Geracitano (Interviewer)

LC – Lino Cardone (Interviewee)

Digital Interviews

of

Keith Conlon

Rosa Colanero

Lino Cardone



TRANSCRIPTS

Interviews Conducted by:

Giuseppe Geracitano

President

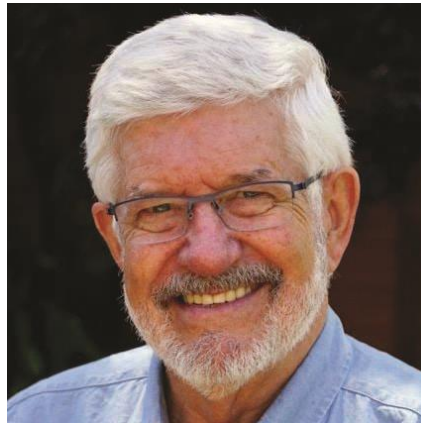
Italian Historical Society of SA Inc.

Interview with Keith Conlon

Recorded by Giuseppe Geracitano on the 27th of June 2023

At 2a Davis Street, Woodville South. 5011

**Category: Italian Community Organisations in South Australia:
The Establishment of Italian Community Radio, *Radio
Paesani*, in 1975**



00:00:03 GG: Recording for the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Incorporated for the project "*A Trunk Full of Dream, A Suitcase Full of Memories; Stories of Italian Immigrants in South Australia*", Category: Italian Community Organisations in South Australia; the Establishment of Italian Community Radio, Radio Paesani, in nineteen seventy-five [1975], on Tuesday the Twenty-seventh [27th] of June two-thousand-and twenty-three [2023]. Interviewer: *Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano*, President of the Society; interviewee: Keith Conlon, the then Manager of 5UV, at 2A Davis St Woodville South, South Australia, five-thousand-and-eleven [5011].

Can I ask your name?

00:00:27 KC: Keith Conlon,

00:00:28 GG: Keith you were involved in setting up community radio in South Australia, can you tell me how it came about and what led you eventually to introduce the ethnic languages?

00:00:47 KC: It's, it was the beginning of a big story the nineteen seventies [1970s]. In radio in general and then particularly in community broadcasting and of course within that ethnic broadcasting speaking communities in their language. So, if we go back to the beginnings in Adelaide for some years in the sixties [1960s], a couple of people in the department of Continuing Education of the University of Adelaide were really interested in using radio to broaden their reach. They were not about getting degrees or post grad [postgraduate] stuff; it was about non-credit adult education as they called it. And they thought, quite rightly thought, that looking elsewhere they could

use radio. But of course, radio, you're going to have to set up a station that's going to cost money, and while there was interest in the university itself, they couldn't attract the funds. And by the way, the models that they had really reflect that the community broadcasting movement was on the ripple all around the world. You had things like BBC [British Broadcasting Corporation] Further Education, which was an established post, no, I should say community education arm of the BBC. But you did have community radio movements in the UK [United Kingdom] saying, hey, we could do this on our own, we'd like to do more. In America you've got small, what they called public stations, which were looking at moving from, say, agricultural education out in the Midwest through to the broader idea of how there's a commercial station. Why couldn't we do it? So, we're sort of this ripple happening around the world. It's happening definitely in Adelaide. And then comes a magic moment. A fellow who'd made quite a lot of money, almost accidentally, in the Poseidon mining boom, he was involved as a secretary to some of the mining companies, ended up having really quite a lot of money, unintentionally so to speak, and he gave quite a lot of it away down North Terrace. He was interested in culture and the arts and in railway history and so on and so. At that stage, an anonymous donor put up one hundred thousand dollars [\$100,000] to start an educational station at the University of Adelaide, and that was important step number one, by the way, his name was Ken Sterling. He was anonymous until, sadly, he died in the age in his early 40s, jogging along the Torrents [River Torrens]. At that stage I was one of about three people who knew who he was. So, Ken starts the ball rolling. Now we need the government to give a license to the University of Adelaide. The bureaucracy didn't know what to do with this. When I say us, I was luckily the first member of the, I was put on as the first producer manager as they called me. I was going to have to be producing things and managing things. The equivalent of an academic.

00:03:53 GG: Can I just stop you there? At that stage were you employed by the university?

00:03:57 KC: Yes, I got a job. It was an application job, and it was an academic status. And so, I'd luckily finished Arts and Law. I was tutoring in the law school part time and I was working in radio. I'd started working in current affairs radio at Five AD [5AD, commercial radio station in Adelaide] at the time. And so, while a lot of people say, oh yeah, you started the five UV [5UV], in fact I'd. Needed that combo of a bit of academic and a bit of practical radio and a bit of well what are you going to do next. And so, I get the job as the sort of full timer working on it with a very good adult education team around me. And there was, it was a huge conundrum for government. We were applying to the Broadcasting Control Board, it is not our department that's commercial radio, and so we were talking to the PMG [Postmaster General] Department. And they controlled things like taxi services and the sort of point-to-point wireless systems. And so, they were thinking, we were saying, as I describe it, sort of only half joking. We said, well, we'd like a license please. And they said, well, are you a commercial station? No. Well, are you an ABC [Australian Broadcasting Corporation] station? No. And they said well we haven't got any licenses for you, and so they've invented one. They invented

under the Wireless Telegraphy Act, not the Broadcasting Act. Under the Wireless Telegraphy Act, they invented an experimental license, but they put rules on it which in retrospect were quite daft. We weren't allowed to play music, even to the point where we, as we did, we're putting out those brilliant 1960s productions on LPs [long playing vinyl records] of Shakespeare plays. So, at the beginning of one of them, it's a Twelfth Night [12th Night], 'if music be the food of love, play on'. It's a deadly silence. We had to cut the music out, so it was difficult to begin with. It was frustration, frustration, frustrating. It was bureaucracy. But luckily it was also a time, a whole lot of things have to come together for this, for us to get where we did. Then there's a change of government and now there's an interest in community broadcasting at least the, I should say that in fact the government was already in when we're battling with the early license, Whitlam Government nineteen seventy-two [1972]. So, as they develop, they're starting to get interested in this community broadcasting bubbling that's going on not just in Adelaide but in other cities as well. And so, they eventually gave us in late seventy-four [1974], they said you can now have a sort of a full license, but it must be, it's still an experimental one, but we would require the university to give community access; which is exactly what we wanted in the Department of Adult Education, because we are by now seeing the sorts of potential there is for community access of all kinds, including language broadcasting. And so, and so in October nineteen seventy-four [1974] comes the really a sort of a fateful marker, you know, it's the next big step. We, the Department of Continuing Education, ran a community broadcasting seminar, which was about seeking advice from community groups, it was about seeking, I guess, ideas for what you would do, what would, what would your community groups do? And predictably, there were a lot of ethnic groups that came to that. And it does lock into those same sorts of movements that of course saw so many multicultural good things happen in the community. The communities were finding their feet. They were no longer just battling to survive; they were now in their own right creating. So, well, maintaining their own culture and contributing to a much broader South Australian culture, it was a very exciting time.

00:08:06 GG: Yeah, this was the offspring from the Dunstan [Hon Don Dunstan, Premier of South Australia] years. Yes, from Al Grassby [Hon Al Grassby, Minister for Immigration in the Federal Labor Whitlam Government].

00:08:11 KC: Yes, exactly. All of these things coming together are very important. The Dunstan era, which we look back on now, and you think, wow, what do you mean he invented? I mean, dining and food is a very important part of our culture, but the idea that you couldn't have an *alfresco café*. These things were being driven, of course, by people who've lived with *alfresco cafés* in their home countries and so, but it's much deeper than that. Of course, it's not just food on the street, but all of these things are gelling and in October nineteen seventy-four [1974], the community broadcasting seminar, I can remember it was in downstairs, part of the university, now part of the Barr Smith Library. And it was, it was exciting. They were here, all these people busting to do some radio of their own. And at last, we're now talking about,

well, how are we going to do it? Not well, well, we'll have to, you know, wait, and see.

00:09:07 GG: So, can you remember some of the people that came to that seminar?

00:09:11 KC: Yes, I can. Yes I can, because some of them have been involved in Italian broadcasting. One of the founders, of course. They were one of the first five language groups and community groups on the air. *Ilario* was there.

00:09:25 GG: That's *Ilario Nesci*?

00:09:27 KC: Yes, *Gardini*.

00:09:29 GG: *Alex Gardini*?

00:09:30 KC: *Alex Gardini* and *Rosetta Colanero* and, I can remember them at that stage that we were all very much younger, of course, we're talking about seventy-four [1974] and they were clearly geared up. The Italian group were clearly, well, on their way, they had ideas already and you could see that they're going to, they're going to be one of the first. *Paul Kokke* was another one who had been doing a Dutch program just half an hour or an hour a week on a commercial station. and so, he's thinking, wow, hang on, this could no longer be me, this could be community as well. And that was one of the essential things that we thought was important. This was not about individuals coming on and creating their own programme, like, you know, *Paul Kokke* is an example here. Before that he's just doing it. You know, he that he's the man. He's made it up now. It had to be community based. It was a condition of the license in a sense, but a sense, but it was also an important facet and principle that that our Board of Continuing Education thought was important that you couldn't, we're not trying to emulate the commercial sector and create D J's or personalities or whatever. We're about the community having a voice. And so, it was important that the radio group was endorsed by its own community in some way. It was pretty loose. He didn't have to, you know, it wasn't about filling in ten pages of stuff about it, what this or that, but it had to, there was a genuine sense that it represented the community and that was quite clear with *Paesani*, the *Radio Paesani* is going to be like that and. So, it joined five others. Four others, I should say, in March, right? I think it's March the third nineteen seventy-five [1975], is it? Yes. I've just written it down in my diary. It will now become one of the things that I post about this happened. It's well after all, we're coming up to the fiftieth, aren't we? Yes, it's not far away.

00:11:32 GG: So, who were the other groups?

00:11:35 KC: So, gee, you're testing me now? Well, Dutch was one. Ukraine was one interesting and now that we look for, look back from where we are now. Polish I'm pretty sure was one. Can you recall the last one?

00:11:50 GG: Greek?

00:11:52 KC: Greek, quite right. Well done. Yeah. So that's, that's the initial group. And that very quickly expanded though, to the point where I think by the end of that year we'd passed the twenty-five, twenty-six marks of different ethnic

groups wanting to do stuff some could only manage an hour a week. That's fine. That's, you know, it's a smaller community and that satisfies a need. But people particularly like *Paesani*, they were....

00:12:15 GG: They were busting to.....

00:12:21 KC: They were moving and of course we know that it's not very long after that that there's room for five EBI [5EBI] to be spun off, so to speak. There's enough clout because in the end we were doing forty hours of community access.

00:12:38 GG: But for us, to the ethnic community?

00:12:40 KC: That was including over sixties radio, but the vast bulk of it was ethnic community access. Yeah, right.

00:12:48 GG: So, there were other groups like the over sixties?

00:12:51 KC: Yes, yes, but it was, community access, to all intents and purposes, meant ethnic broadcasting on fiveUV [5UV] in Adelaide. There were, as I mentioned earlier, there were similar movements in other States and they were one way or other also being able to get a voice on the air, literally a voice in their community.

00:13:02 GG: So, there were in Melbourne, there was some commercial stations that exits, three or two.

00:13:22 KC: two EA [2EA] and three EA [3EA]. They were actually government stations or government licenses originally intended to be handed to the community. Then it was would the ABC [Australian Broadcasting Corporation] take them, and the ABC [Australian Broadcasting Corporation] were reluctant. And so SBS [Special Broadcasting Services] was born. Affected, yes.

00:13:40 GG: Yeah, I know. Especially I love history.

00:13:43 KC: Yeah, so that there are two areas in Federal Government terms who played a big role. One was the Labor Government. In the seventies [1970s], but then in the late seventies into the early eighties, the Fraser Government with Tony Staley as the Minister of Communications, played an important second wave role.

00:14:03 GG: Now, you said that the Continuing Education Department was very much involved in promoting all this. How did the rest of the University community receive this?

00:14:19 KC: I think the answer is generally very well, because there was some, we'd already established at five UV this continuing education, broader reach to the community, sharing, if you like, knowledge and understanding and ideas with the community. There was a good body of support for that through different Faculties, so they were either silent supporters or in some cases they were official supporters on the Board of Continuing Education or the University Council and so on. And we were also blessed with a very good Vice Chancellor, Don Stranks [Professor Donald Richard Stranks], who was very much in favour of it and was a very strong supporter of the station getting going. We were, by the way, a listener supported station, which is a

phrase that went into the language very early and still around internationally. We relied not just on government, or sorry University funds, but also on grants which we would apply for from the Australia Council, from all over the joint and also from listener subscriptions. We formed the, we called it the Radio University Guild, and one of the reasons why we formed it was to raise money and it was a subscription scheme, if you like, listen to supported radio. But it was also going back to that crazy license idea that you could only broadcast, you couldn't broadcast music, you couldn't, and you had to almost pretend you're a taxi service. You had to pretend that you were only talking to members. So, we're clearly broadcasting, but that created, I suppose, not only the funding, our funding mechanism, but also the fiction that we were broadcasting to a fixed group, the Radio University Guild. That's in the very early seventies [1970s]. And by the way, there was a, and I mentioned earlier, that there was this wave around Australia in seventy-four [1974], same year as the community broadcasting seminar, just a month or two earlier I was in Sydney with a couple of others from the station and it was the first get together officially of all of the broadcasting movements, so we had five music stations in Sydney and in Melbourne wanting to license, we had community people like three CR [3CR] in Melbourne wanting a real community broadcasting station. We had youth, we had University applicants from Students Representative Councils, and five UV [5UV] which is coming from an adult education angle, but with the potential to do more community broadcasting. We're all sitting in a room trying to work out, you know, how we could share each other's ideas and how we could work together to get these things over the line. And the government sort of dropped the plan on the day, so, well, here's how it could work. And the next morning we formed the, what was then called the Public Broadcasting Association of Australia, at which I was suddenly found myself, I was in the chair. So, we now have this really very wide-ranging group, but we've all got the same aim to do community radio of one kind or another. So, seventy-four [1974] is a big year for all community broadcasting. And then of course it's also for ethnic broadcasting in South Australia, and that definitely led the way in Australia because the doors open and by March seventy-five [1975], *Paesani* is in the door big time.

00:17:49 GG: All right. So, the first people to go on *Radio Paesani* was *Rosetta Colanero* and *Ilario Nesci*.

00:17:58 KC: Yes

00:18:00 GG: Did as others joined, did they have to get permission from you or did they just approach the group?

00:18:10 KC: Other people? You mean for *Radio Paesani*?

00:18:12 GG: Yeah.

00:18:15 KC: It was it's the group's business this. This was the idea that was in effect a sub license if you like, it was never defined as such, but, and I'll come back to your question about what the other university people think about this, the idea was that it ought to be run by the community, by a representative group

of the community. And as I say, we didn't say you must be voted in by this or that or this or that, but there had to be a genuine sense of community and so if more people wanted to join *Rosetta* [Colanero] and *Ilario* [Nesci] and so on. They would talk to one of them or *Alex* [Gardini, Chairman of the Italian Education Movement] and they'd come on board. And the point was that it ought to be your programme, so, you make it and you control it, and the only rule is you don't mess up our license in effect. a) you do speak genuinely with and to your community, and b) you don't mess up. That brings us back to the sense of how the University body regarded it, as I suggested earlier that we had a lot of supporters for the idea of the University reaching out and doing more in the community. But there was some reluctance about ethnic broadcasting at University Council level, the governing body. I'm not sure how many people were involved, but it didn't, luckily, it didn't stop anything, but there was some who were just a bit concerned, and the question was effectively raised, how do you know what they're talking about? And of course, that's a good question because we were not fluent in many languages. So, we took the attitude, when I say we, the Board of Continuing Education, with a brilliant Law Professor *Alex Castles* at its head, and he was very much, he loved media of all kinds, newspapers, radio, television. But he was also very progressive about these ideas and so that suited my philosophy as the producer-manager. And so, we, we had genuine full support for the idea that as long as you do the right thing, then go for it. And we formed a complaints committee in case there were members of the community who had a problem or perhaps there were, you know, maybe constitutional issues. They never arose, by the way. We had perhaps two or three, I can't remember if it was more than that, but it was a very small number of community complaints about a program. Predictably, one of them was about a program called the 'Yugoslav Community Program'. Yugoslavia was still at that stage an entity, but naturally we've now seen since of course in the decades since the potential divisions within and divisions which have been existed in Central Europe for a very long time. In fact, we did have a complaint, and I remember *Alex Castles* and I saying afterwards, blow me, I didn't think we'd be going back to the eleventh century, but that that's another story. Those sorts of tensions and potential conflicts led us to see that there needed to be a voice for the, for the nationalities within, for the and they are now on the geographical map again too. So that was about the only time that we thought we had some difficulties with making community broadcasting look.

00:21:47 GG: Can I bring you back to the Italian situation?

00:21:49 KC: Yes, yes.

00:21:51 GG: Now, one of the, there was a division in the Italian community. One of the groups called *FILEF* (*Federazione Italiana Lavoratori Emigrati e Famiglie*) and I don't know if you ever come across it, it is a communist based organisation which is based within the Communist Party of Italy.

00:22:10 KC: Yes, OK.

00:22:11 GG: And now they had problems. In the sense that they want to take over some of the programmes, yes. Did they ever complain to you officially?

00:22:21 KC: We, as far as I can recall, we didn't ever have any official correspondence, with, no it must have been within the Community that that was resolved.

00:22:32 GG: Yeah, now I just want to put that on record. Yeah, so now you started seventy-five [1975], how did it progress? How long did it go for and what happened after the end?

00:22:50 KC: Yes, well it was a, it was a very exciting time because not only is community access mainly ethnic access happening and therefore bringing a whole lot more people into the studio, into making radio, it's also a time when five UV [5UV] is expanding because it's allowed to do more as well. And so, we had, we ended up with about one hundred and twenty volunteers coming through the doors by I'd say, I'm guessing you know like seventy-five, seventy-six [1975, 1976] and that wouldn't have counted all of the ethnic volunteers because some of them of course would prepare stuff and maybe didn't go on the air and so on. But it was it, it was a vibrant, engaging, multicultural community that lived downstairs in what's now part of the Barr Smith Library and that it really moved very quickly. Because when you think about it by, is it nineteen seventy eight [1978] that with FM, yes, it is nineteen seventy eight [1978] is when experimental FM license has become available [6th October 1978 5EBI was granted the first ethnic public broadcasting license in Australia on the FM band]. Back to this issue of how you expand community radio. They're starting to become available and the very first ones have been handed out as experimental licenses, again, with that very much due process, you might say by *Moss Kass* in the still in the Whitlam era because he sort of said, all right, you've asked for a license, you know, here you go. But then it became more a question of bandwidths and how many licenses and so on. And so, there are obviously bigger issues and in fact there were, there was a change in structure at the top. The Australian Broadcasting Tribunal came in which was a much more, much better structure because it took into account these different forms of radio and television and also brought more community advice and more community access to the very process of giving licenses and keeping them. But down on the ground with us back in Adelaide ethnic broadcasting it's not very long before it is. So, it's so expansive, it still needs more room that five EBIFM [5EBIFM] is born. And so that created a hole for us in the sense that community access was offered at a fee per hour, which the community raised in the case of the Italian programme and all the others. And then, that helped the university radio station survive. But then that meant we had a big hole, but we were then, you know, worked our way out of that, and then in the meantime, ethnic broadcasting has a new home.

00:25:40 GG: Well, that's very interesting background to how community radio started. Yeah, I mean, as you know, I was very much involved in the process. And in the case of the *Radio Paesani*, it was actually an off spin of the Italian Education Movement.

00:26:02 KC: Yeah.

00:26:04 GG: *Alex (Gardini)* was the Chairman.

00:26:07 KC: Which means that the Italian community already had a vehicle, didn't it? So, there was a vehicle there ready to roll, which was doing good stuff for the language and for the culture in the community. And it sees, it sees ethnic radio, community radio, as a way of doing it, another way of doing what it was already doing. It's it, it's yet another of those coincidence. All these things have to come together. And it was, the Italian program was a leader in its time because it had, now you've reminded me, of course, it already had that substance behind it.

00:26:43 GG: Yes, would I mean the early nineteen-seventies [1970s], mid-nineteen-seventies [1970s] was an exciting time for us.

00:26:56 KC Yes,

00:26:57 GG: In the sense, when I say us the Italians, in a sense that there were already a number of people graduating and going into the workforce and be in a position where they could change things, yes. Whereas before it was matter of advocacy and hopefully somebody would change them. We were then in a position where we could actually change things.

00:27:17 KC: Yes.

00:27:19 GG: We were teachers, we were involved in businesses and therefore we could work within the system.

00:27:29 KC: Yes.

00:27:30 GG: As opposed to, in my case, being a member of the University staff, that gave a lot of clout to what we had to say because it was backed by the University and the University was seen as the fountain of the knowledge.

00:27:47 KC: So similarly, the Italian community, as the biggest for a start outside the English migrants, has then played a role in the, I suppose the formalisation of multiculturalism with ethnic affairs departments coming into government, with multicultural affairs, with a Commission and so on, which was a thread through there. There's an Italian leadership thread through all of that, isn't it?

00:28:17 GG: Which is not spin off from the 'Galbally Report' [Review of Migrant Services and Programs 1978] and *Totaro* [Italian-born Chairman of the Ethnic Affairs Commission of New South Wales] in been adviser to *Fraser* [Hon Malcolm Fraser, 22nd Prime Minister of Australia].

00:28:26 KC: *Paul Totaro*. I remember him, yeah.

00:28:28 GG: Yeah, yeah. It's a long history. It's a well, thank you very much, Keith.

00:28:33 KC: It's a great pleasure Joe and it best wishes with your work. It's marvellous that these things are being recorded both literally on tape but also will then be available to other people. And with the fifty years coming up of community ethnic broadcasting, one hopes that there'll be celebrations galore.

00:28:53 GG: Well, I'm hope so. I mean we, a lot of organisations have now reaching the stage where either forty, thirty, forty, fifty years and we are producing booklets for the various organisations and that's one of the roles of the Italian Historical Society to record as much as we can and to make available to as many people as possible through the State Library, which is the one repository where everybody can have access to.

00:29:37 KC: Our stories, you're absolutely right.

00:29:37 GG: Our stories, yes. Thank you, Keith.

00:29:39 KC: Thanks very much, Joe.

Interview with Rosa Colanero

Recorded by Giuseppe Geracitano on the 21st of July 2023

at Stirling Library, Stirling. South Australia 5152

**Category: Women's Life Achievements: Incorporating the
Establishment of Italian Community Radio, *Radio
Paesani*, in 1975**



00:00:04 GG: Recording for the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Incorporated for the project "*A Trunk Full of Dreams, A Suitcase Full of Memories: Stories of Italian Immigrants in South Australia*", Category: Women's Life Achievement with particular attention to the Establishment of Italian Community Radio, Radio Paesani, in nineteen seventy-five [1975], on Friday the twenty-first [21st] of July two-thousand-and-twenty-three [2023]. Interviewer: *Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano*, President of the Society; interviewee: Rosa Colanero, recorded at Stirling Library, Stirling South Australia, five thousand-one hundred-and-fifty-two [5152]

Good morning, Rosa.

00:00:57 RC: Good Morning.

00:01:00 GG: Could you tell me where were you born?

00:00:05 RC: Well, I was born in *Castel Frentano* [*Provincia di Chieti Abruzzo*], which is a small town in central Italy. It's a very small town at the nearest, I guess biggest town is *Lanciano* and it's on the Adriatic coast.

00:01:22 GG: And when were you born?

00:01:24 RC: I was born in the early fifties [1950s]. And yeah, so yeah, as I said in *Castel Frentano*, Yeah, right.

00:01:30 GG: And your parents' name.

00:01:55 RC: Well, my father is *Domenico Colanero*, and he was born in *Castel Frentano*. And my mother, *Adina Colanero*, well, she was *de Batista*. So, over the years there's been a coming to Australia, the sisters took on their husband's names. But as a lot of people would know, in Italy you don't do that. And anytime that my mother's been in Italy like she's recognised as *Adina de Batista*. Yeah.

00:02:05 GG: And what did your parents do in Italy?

00:02:10 RC: Well, my parents got married very young, they actually eloped. They, on my father's side, they weren't really very happy with, eighteen-year-olds getting married. So, they eloped. And my father actually worked at the, what was the local brickworks, and that was really why he came to Australia, that his brother, his younger brother, at the time was working sort of part time in the *Comune* [Local Council], his younger brother studied, but he also worked. And they saw an ad for recruiting and he mentioned it to my father and some of his friends and two things about that, the, in the, in that poster or ad they were looking for, and it was I guess part of the assisted migrant's package where they were looking for people from the brickworks, which was why it was in the local council. And I guess the other thing is that they thought, they thought it was Austria. And so, with these two or three friends they, they were in their early twenties, and with these friends they decided to apply. They thought, well, a couple of years, and then we can, we see the world. My father's attitude was see the world and whatever, of that group of friends, the three or four of them that applied, my father was the only one who got accepted. And I guess it was partly because of the work that he was doing at the brickworks. And anyway, so he was quite you know, he was young and I was already born and so, he thought, it'd be an interesting experience, even though he knew his family was totally against it. So, as it happened he, we went to Milan to do the medical tests and whatever, and I was, I had tonsillitis, so the medical person said I had to have the operation before I could go. And so my father got on the ship on his own with the knowledge that my mother and myself would follow after I had the operation, which I did have with local anaesthetic, and it is still one of my traumatic experiences in life, where if I ever go to the dentist and they put that cold stainless steel plier in the mouth, I get the, I get the smell and the image, and also I get that there was a nurse holding my two hands, and so I can't really wear anything on my wrist that I get quite, I guess claustrophobic would be the word. Anyway, towards the end that I did have the, I did have the operation. I remember that they just gave me lots of ice cream and stuff.

00:05:23 GG: Can I just ask you what age you were?

00:05:26 RC: I was probably, I think I'd just turned three because that was when they would do it. Yeah. So yeah, I'll be about three, I imagine by then, because I think that's what my mother and father had been told, that they wouldn't do the operation until I was three. My, my *nonna*, my father's mother, was not keen on us going, and so she supervised my mother writing a letter to say, we'll just wait for you here at which, my father and mother were quite independent, so, it's quite unusually [unusual] at that time that they didn't

go home to live with either of the parents, they actually rented out a house so there were the two of them in that house and then later I came along, so quite independent, and when my father got that letter he rang the post office and my mother was told to go to the post office where my father and her spoke on the phone and my father said I want you to come to Australia. So, so my mother said, she said she wasn't going to lose her husband for just to please her mother-in-law, and so my father, so we came to Australia. And my father then was, he did go to Bonegilla [Migrant Reception and Training Centre near Wodonga, in northeast Victoria], from Melbourne he was taken to Bonegilla. But he was only there for a very short time because as I said, he was, he was one of the first assisted migrants from southern Europe and he then from Bonegilla he was taken to Glenelg [South Australia] and he worked at Halletts [J Hallett and Son, founded in 1904 was for most of the 20th century South Australia's most important brickmaking firm] which is now the Brickworks, he worked there, and then a few years later they sent him to PGH [PGH Bricks and Pavers]. So, he was used, as I understand it, for the various techniques of the kilns, et cetera, that were happening at Halletts. So, he did that and we lived at Hindmarsh.

00:07:41 GG: Yes. Before you'd get off to, when did, you remember when your father emigrated? What year?

00:07:50 RC: I think it was, was it fifty-five, fifty-six [1955, 1956] around that time.

00:07:56 GG: Yeah, and how long before you came over?

00:08:00 RC: About a year because we as soon as the what's her name was done, I was, as soon as the operation was done, we came. My mother and I came on the ship. I, yeah, I started to put in a box some of the, that information and then I looked for it. I thought that this episode would help me in bringing that stuff together, but I can't find it. The, our spare room is a mess at the moment because my mother's moved into care, and I've put things like photos and whatever in boxes to be sorted so I couldn't find it.

00:08:34 GG: But that, that's good that we got time for that. Yeah. So, you were still a very young child when you can over?

00:08:40 RC: Yeah, yeah, I was. I think I turn, I think I must have been four when we, when we migrated, when my mother and I came out because, as I said, very shortly after that we, I, I went to school to Hindmarsh [suburb in the west of Adelaide].

* * * * *

01:01:23 GG: Now university, what did you choose to do?

01:01:25 RC: Well, interestingly enough, I started, I started university doing a science degree because that's really what I was interested in. It was interesting because I had the two things. One of them was I wanted to be a writer and then I was interested in science. So, I sometimes when you think about the what ifs, I started and did ecology which was just coming in and did zoology and also genetics. We, a friend of mine, and we're still friends with Libby, we

were in classes where there'd be like 400 males and just be the, a few of us and you know that was yeah so and the maths [mathematics], so, I yeah, so, it's interesting like I started off doing that and I really then wanted to, so, I changed degrees at the end of well, beginning of second year and turned it into a an Arts Degree. So, I then did English, English literature obviously, and again the sort of things that interested me. So, I did English, I did Australian Studies and Ancient Studies, and then I did Politics. So, at that stage, what was his name? He then went to Flinders. He was still at Adelaide in doing politics.

01:03:39 GG: Neil Blewett?

01:03:41 RC: No, I didn't actually ever have Neil Blewett as a teacher, I don't think. What was his name? So, he was there, so, they went to, they went to Flinders. Yeah. Because by that stage the Italian started at Flinders. But I didn't, I didn't go there. Yeah, so but always sort of kept in touch, I did that. So changed to, and what I can remember as far as I probably gave my father many disappointments, but I still remember when I told him that I was changing degrees, that he was disappointed.

01:04:04 GG: He preferred you to be a scientist?

01:04:07 RC: Yeah, he would have preferred for me to be a scientist.

01:04:10 GG: Was that because of some idea that scientists were so, as they say, higher than---?

01:04:22 RC: Well, yeah, I think. I think he saw that; I think he had these high expectations of me and I think he saw, which ended up being right, was that I would become a teacher.

01:04:35 GG: In those days, medicine was the top,

01:04:41 RC: Yeah,

01:04:42 GG: For Italians then came---

01:04:45 RC: And I chose not to, not to do medicine,

01:04:47 GG: Than came Engineering---

01:04:49 RC: But both my father and, yeah, both my father and Doctor *Giorgio* was sort of like, you know why wasn't I doing medicine? But I'm yeah, I wasn't.

01:04:55 GG: That was a common thing with Doctor *George*. I remember spending about an hour with Doctor *George* trying to convince me to do medicine.

01:05:04 RC: Well, he kept saying to me that his sons weren't going to do it. So, you know, but Michael [Dr *George's* son] eventually finished his law degree, so that was good. Yeah. I guess they were fully supportive. I knew that they were there and I knew that at times I was disappointing them. But yeah---

01:05:29 GG: Did you go initially, I mean, to eventually became a teacher? Did you go initially thinking you're gonna be a teacher or---?

01:05:36 RC: No. As I said, I wanted to be, I think since probably since I was six or seven, from the time I started to read on my own, I wanted to write and I wrote stories from when I was six, seven, eight. You can, you can, I can still find them. That's really what I wanted to do. And that's really why then I did go into journalism. And when that wasn't possible, then I yeah, I guess I was interested in that wider thing of. But I guess what I learned was that yeah, that in a sense I'm not that logical whatever thinker the scientists, yeah. So, I think going on to do the humanities was probably, probably a good idea. But when you think about it now, like the person who, the genetics tutor that Libby and I had, I've forgotten her name now, but you know she went on, this was genetics at early on, so, they've gone on to, they did the Genome Project [Genome Project, a nonprofit collaboration genetic anthropological study began in 2005 that was intended to shed light on the history of human migration through the analysis of DNA samples contributed by people worldwide] et cetera, which you've got the threads, like two of my godchildren then went and did work in that area. So, it's good. But yeah, so, but not me. Yeah, so yeah. So, I did go into teaching.

01:06:54 GG: Talking about university life, social life, boys, what was that sort of experience?

01:07:05 RC: Well I think, it's sort of interesting because I, as it happened both with the girls and the boys, there was a bit of a, there was a bit of an age gap, so, so a lot of the boys, Italian background, they were slightly older than me and so they were really like big brothers so, so they took me out a lot and again, my parents, firstly my parents went out a lot anyway, so they, my father was one of the ones who started up Italian clubs. So, I was sort of involved in all of that. I can remember year eleven and twelve, the nuns were really quite worried that during exam time I'd be going out on a Saturday night and whatever.

01:07:52 GG: Which club was this?

01:07:53 RC: Well eventually my father and his groups set up what was called the [*il*] *Centro di Adriatico Club* [established late 1960s]. Again, it shows my father's broadmindedness in the sense of he'd been involved in the *Garibaldi Club*, in the first moments of the *Madonna di Montevergine*, et cetera. And then he and others, the *Abruzzesi* [people from the *Abruzzo* region in Italy] thought wanted to set up their own club because they were saying, well, you know, the others, the *Garibaldi* was essentially *Calabrese* [people from *Calabria* region in Italy], et cetera. So, they said, well, why don't we set up that? But they didn't set up an *Abruzzo Club*. My father said, well, you know, you got the *Marchegiani* [people from the *Marche* region in Italy] and you've got the *Molisani* [people from the region of *Molise* in Italy] et cetera. So, it was essentially his name, the *Centro di Adriatico Club*. So they set those clubs up and I by that stage I was in high school and so we'd make, we'd make the posters to do, to do that so that's what we did yeah so and then eventually the *Centro di Adriatico* became the *Casa D'Abruzzo* and then after that, again with my father, that got changed to the cause of the *Casa D'Abruzzo Molise* because they were more *Molisani* who wanted to be part of that so he

was very much in the community. I'm just sort of saying that we went out a lot. My parents went out a lot to do with the clubs, the different clubs and used to go out like with my parents and that group of, you know, that. And I'd been doing that since I was really young. Then I had, I had, as I said, these, they were mainly older brothers there was only a few really who were the sisters and they looked after me, they would take me out, but they were there and so they knew that they would know that they were there. And it was like, if I was there sort of dance, to dance or something and say a boy would ask me to go and have a drink, then one of the males would, one of my big brothers, so to speak, would come up and sort of say, just and they would, they would say something like, oh, you know, we'll have to, we'll have to get you home at about twelve, et cetera. So, they looked after me. The, the positive stuff about that was that I was very popular because I had these older males. So, when you went to Italian weddings or celebrations, a lot of the girls hung out with me because what would happen is the boys would always come and ask me to dance and then eventually ask them so. So that was sort of I played that sort of role, which was great. And then when I was at uni [university], I guess when I was at uni [university] what ended up happening was that I did start to go out, but again it was within that group where there was the *Italian Tertiary Students* [Association] and so we started to go to that and functions to do with that. So, I went out a lot, but mainly as a group. I got asked out more often than not. I'd say no. I'd go to parties et cetera with, and I had friends that I would go with but none that I had deep and meaningful relationships with. So, it was more, was more a group thing that we, that we went out and had a nice time. But I yeah, I didn't really, I didn't really get a, I have a boyfriend, at that time.

01:11:53 GG: And the group was mainly Italian?

01:11:55 RC: Well, I suppose, yeah, there was a period when they were mainly Italians. I was very popular with the, sounds a bit silly, but I was very popular with the Greek boys at uni [university], because what they'd say was that they couldn't really go out with the Australian girls and they weren't allowed to go out with the Greek girls. So, I was, you know, and it was, and they they'd say that, so, and I yeah, they were. I remember there was a whole group of engineering students, so and you'd go, yeah, it was friendly, but no, they weren't.

01:12:35 GG: At that stage, did you feel that you had a mission, or when did you actually realise that there was something you got to do, something for the Italian community?

01:12:45 RC: Yeah, I think, I think I sort of knew that all along because, as I said, my parents were involved in the *Garibaldi Club* and all of that right from the beginning and then with the, with the *Centro di Adriatico*, *Casa D'Abruzzo* that it was sort of a place not only for entertainment but to where people were based. So, I was, I was very conscious of that my father was into that community sort of stuff. He was quite pleased that young people went to the, went to the clubs and stuff. Yeah, so, so I was aware of that. And also, then through the Tertiary, Italian Tertiary Students [Association], I was aware

that, yeah, I guess I was aware that there were different, the different situations. I was aware that not everybody had had the support structures that I'd had. You know that again people that I'd gone to school with have been, it'd been sent to work and other things. So, so I was aware of all of that and the, and I repeat my parents had always taken people in at home and looked after them so. So going to uni [university] for me was just really and it is really associated with all of that, and I was aware of how difficult it was, like I did Italian by correspondence in year twelve did reasonably well. But as we went along, that was in a sense why I got involved in the Italian Education Movement, because what you had was, you were aware that there were young people who Italian background who had no connection to their Italian culture.

01:14:44 GG: Before we get on to that, because that's leads on to *Radio Paesani* and all that. At what stage did you decide that you're going to become a teacher then?

01:14:56 RC: I didn't really, I just, it's just that I did, it was the easiest thing to do. And the other thing is that I got one of those teaching whatever, I was on a Commonwealth scholarship, and I think we used to get twenty dollars a month and teaching was being on as a student whatever, I think.

01:15:17 GG: Bonded to the Education Department.

01:15:18 RC: Yeah, I was bonded to the Education [Department] was a lot more and it was sort of you had that independence you know that because yeah. So, in a sense I well, I didn't really fall into teaching because that's probably not right either. But one of the other things that we did was that, right from when I was a very young age, I was used as a teacher. You see right through, I think the community around us, including my aunts and uncles and whatever, but they all knew. So, I was always used to teach. My mother said that I would actually get my dolls when I was six or seven and teach my dolls, and then even into primary school, I would teach other kids. Then certainly by the time I got to high school and later other students would be, friends of the family, would be brought to me, would take for, and I would do and even to do with at school, like back in the day, like that primary school. I think I was probably year five or six when students would come out from Italy, then the nuns would get me to go outside with them with their books and so I'd teach them to read, one mother, I remember, saying to my mother saying well that I had taught *Angela* to speak English. So, so I did, I did teach naturally, and I was used as a teacher, like friends of the family, but they were like cousins, second cousins and whatever. Like they'd go overseas and when they came back then I would do tutoring with them. Often, they wouldn't pay because they were related. Didn't get paid as such. Sometimes, by the time I got to uni [university] people were giving me money, but people just came to me for that. I was sort of, people knew that I was, I guess people called it academic, and so we did that. We had, there were two brothers that were like, I think they're second cousins or something and, so, I tutored them for, when they went on holiday and came back and I tutored them and that was sort of really nice because their father he worked at Oliver's they made tennis

rackets and squash rackets, so, I didn't get any money, but I had the best, the best timber whatever. So, they gave us gifts. So, so that part of it the teacher stuff was yeah, in that sense came, came naturally, but I didn't really ever, I hadn't at that stage, I think of becoming a teacher as such. It was just a, it was a way of, yeah, of the, as I said, the \$20.00 a month from the Commonwealth scholarship wasn't really enough. And I was sort of fairly independent and stuff.

01:18:35 GG: How did you find the Education Department?

01:18:42 RC: With George, [Dr *George Smolicz*, Reader in Education teaching Sociology of Education at University of Adelaide] I did Arts obviously in the end and then, when I met up with him, and in fact I had just really bumped into him, and he remembered me from Saint Dominic's, and so, he said I should do various bits and pieces. And so, when I did the DipEd [Diploma in Education], he was really keen for me to do further studies, so surveys and stuff, which by the way, I had already done because and he was aware that I ended up doing Sociology and we did as a group work. We did surveys in Mile End et cetera, which was for me was quite interesting because it, I was really more aware of our Italian community, but going there and talking to older people in that area was really very interesting for me. So that was a group work. But yeah, it was my first foray into surveys, et cetera. And yeah, and sort of been talking to a whole range of people. So that was my first, as I said sociological investigation type thing. And George actually came along to some of those sessions that I think he was encouraging everyone to do those memoirs et cetera and so, so that was part of the Sociology that I did. So, I sort of encountered him a little bit then, yeah. And then as I said I ended up doing the Dip Ed [Diploma of Education] because I had just sort of got the Degree and then I was going to do the Dip Ed and then George [Doctor George Smolicz, Reader in Education, later Professor George Smolicz] yeah he and with *Tony Mercurio* [Tony Mercurio, fellow student] we did a whole heap of work with Italian migrants. And so, George was quite happy with that. And that's where I met Alex, *Alex Gardini* [*Alessandro Gardini*, lecturer in General Studies, Institute of Technology, Adelaide], because at that stage George was trying to encourage, he was, he'd known Alex for quite a while, but Alex, particularly at that stage, was very uncomfortable with himself, and who he was and whatever. And so, George had actually, he [*Alex Gardini*] was at the Institute of Technology at the time, and so, George had placed him on some national committee. And so there were times when I, when Tony [Mercurio] and I would go and meet with George and then Alex would be there, and George was trying to support Alex. Alex said the best thing that he got from being on this Beasley committee [The Interim Committee for Australian Schools Commission, Schools in Australia, chaired by Professor Peter Karmel, appointed by Kym Beazley Snr, Federal Minister for Education. The Committee was to examine the position of government and non-government primary and secondary schools throughout Australia and make recommendation on their needs and the ways of meeting the needs] was that he met his wife and he just, he was very, yeah, it was, he was sort of

uncomfortable with it all, he didn't really quite know. He didn't really think he was Italian.

01:22:16 GG: We all told him he wasn't Italian.

01:22:18 RC: Exactly. That's right. So, he, so that was, so that was. So, he, so George is really important for in that sense of introducing me to Alex who just felt very uncomfortable with it all.

01:22:33 GG: Can I ask you what year was this?

1:22:36 RC: This probably would have been seventy-two [1972], yeah, seventy-three [1973], I reckon, because as I said, it was like, yeah, so. George was it, George had been, like Alex was sitting on some national committee which and I'm pretty sure it was a Beasley education committee and he and George would then say, well you should be sort of saying this and whatever and we weren't really too sure what Alex was saying but then Tony and I were coming up with what we were hearing from the people that we were interviewing et cetera so. Yeah, so Alex was awakening but not really very comfortable and he and so then that's really when lots of things were happening about that time where the, for example, the what *Romano* [*Romano Rubichi*, Deputy Principal Cowandilla Primary School and an advocate for the introduction of Italian in schools], was working hard about getting Italian because there was Italian at Flinders [Flinders University, Chair of Italian established in 1971 with financial contribution of the Italian community in Adelaide] but that was literature and whatever with Professor Comin [first Professor of Italian at Flinders University] and then so we used to go along to some of those things because they put on different, different activities. So, we did go along to those, yeah. And so, we, I think through George's encouragement et cetera, Alex attended a meeting because, particularly *Romano* and a few others, they were really keen, which was the genesis of the Italian Education Movement that we needed a course to teach Italian for teachers, because what was happening at the time was that the Italian teachers, Italian coming out of Flinders, you had people who were studying Italian literature et cetera, but didn't have any methodology and whatever. So, George was interested in that and, *Romano* was interested in that, and that was the beginning of the Italian Education Movement. And so, Alex came along to the meetings as well, and it was parallel to that, and I guess I was sort of a little bit involved with that. *Nevis* [*Nevis Zancanaro*, now *Mercurio*] was already teaching. She'd sort of finished her degree but hadn't studied Italian. But she'd finished her degree at Adelaide and was teaching Italian at Siena [Siena College in the western suburb of Adelaide with high proportion of students of Italian background]. And so, we're sort of trying to she was saying that there was a need for having some methodology in teaching Italian. So, she was, she was there, and we'd also set up because there were a lot of people teaching Italian at that time. Not, not me, but people like *Nevis* who just a little bit older and whatever, who, as I said, didn't have any methodology, there weren't any resources et cetera. So along with the path of the Italian Education Movement was the setting up of the support for teachers. Now what I remember very clearly was that we decided to have a meeting, and it

was at the Italian Club on Carrington Street [South Australian Italian Association, 262A Carrington St. Adelaide] and we, *Tony Mercurio* and *Nevis*, myself, I think there might have been a couple of others. we went to that Hungarian restaurant that was there, just not too far, I've forgotten what it was called, and we ate there anyway. So, then we went to the Italian Club [South Australian Italian Association] for this meeting about teachers, and so, *Romano* and Alex were there, as were a few other people, and it was decided that that we set up a, what became SAATI, [South Australian Association of Teachers of Italian] Italian Teachers Association, because support was needed, teachers teaching Italian didn't have any background in Italian, didn't have resources, et cetera. And what they did, and it was *Romano's* idea, was that the idea of SAATI being like for junior-primary, primary, secondary and whatever, and that the only way he could get on the committee was to become a member. And so, with the ones who were there, we'd already been out to dinner. And so, we got five dollars, and we gave it to *Nevis* who then became the member, on that. So, it's not a problem. But often when you do the history of SAATI, you don't actually go back and look at all the people that were there. You just look at the people who were, who were actually on that first board. Now it's not a problem, but what it does actually show was that the younger teachers didn't get a say really. And that was because we didn't really have money. Most of the people who'd gone along were people who thought, OK, well might sort of teach Italian in the future, but we didn't have the money to become members at that stage. Which meant really that SAATI, the beginning of SAATI, was really more to do with, the, the people like, like *Romano*, who already teachers. *Romano*, I think was the deputy principal at Cowandilla, [Primary School] like Alex and whatever, which wasn't a problem, but it's that issue of the voice that you didn't have that young people's voice.

01:27:58 GG: So, are we talking about seventy-four [1974] or seventy-five [1975]? Because SAATI officially started in October seventy-five [1975].

01:28:15 RC: That, that was probably the incorporation, it started earlier to that because people like---

01:28:22 GG: I've got actually, in fact I've got minutes of the Italian Education Movement and that's, where I got---

01:28:30 RC: Well no. The Italian Education Movement is before seventy-five [1975]. The Italian Education Movement. Yeah. It was like I don't know seventy-two – seventy-three [1972 – 1973]. So, but I'm saying those were parallel. So, you had---

01:28:45 GG: I've got the minutes of the Italian Education Movement that set up SAATI seventy-five [1975].

01:28:52 RC: Well no. Well, that's Italian Education Movement, there were similar people but it's not, that's what I'm saying. It was similar people but they, the SAATI, had, or we were already meeting setting up resources et cetera. It was just because people like Alex and *Romano* and it wasn't a problem, it's just that they were, they were parallel structures. The Italian Education Movement

again was, I don't know, maybe seventy-three [1973]. And if you've got the minutes, you'd be able to tell that the meetings were there and were set up. And again, Alex and *Romano* was a, you know, leader in all that was wanting to set up the Italian Education Movement and incorporate it because the idea was that the teachers needed that. and *Romano*'s main thing was about getting methodology for Italian teachers taught at then the Teachers College [Adelaide College of Advance Education] and so that was his thing and *Alessandro*, Alex was also there. So, what happened with that was that we that many of us, including me, we were on the Italian Education Movement because we thought that was a good idea. You know that because a lot of the people that we were talking to, like I was still at uni [university], but the people that we were talking to were struggling with teaching, they were being asked to teach Italian and the ones who would, who had done Italian literature, were struggling with the methodology, and others, they hadn't done any of that. So, people were supportive of that. Now, as it happened on that, the Italian Education Movement, *Rosa Matto* was the secretary, Sarah Kito was the minute secretary, and for some reason, I'm not really sure why but Alex was then the first President [Chairman] and *Romano* was also there now and I was on the executive. I didn't really have a role except I was on the executive and that's really where the story of *Paesani* [Radio Paesani] begins. So, I'm still at uni [university], but in contact with people who'd been studying, including Italian whatever---

01:31:18 GG: You were involved before that---

01:31:29 RC: Yeah, So, so yeah, that would probably be right. That would be seventy-four [1974] that would put it in context. Yep. So, so then, like as I said, I was on that committee and back in the day both Alex and *Romano* were really strong in their commitment to and they had, they had really had boundaries and clarity and so they, both of them would really put people off, particularly the young people, which is why I mentioned the issue about the setting up of SAATI. So, you had people, we, you, we'd have people in tears after a meeting of the Italian Education Movement. But anyway, we continue to do that now again flowing with that because I was still at Uni [university] probably from, I don't know, seventy-two, seventy-three [1972, 1973] and then seventy-four [1974] I did some volunteer work at Radio Five UV [5UV] radio station at the University of Adelaide] and remember I always wanted to be a journalist et cetera. Anyway, so I did volunteer work there with my friend Libby, and coincidentally the manager of Five UV [5UV], Keith Conlon, lived two houses away, so often on the way to uni [university] in the car and if I was going up the hill, up Daphne Street, to catch the bus, he'd be there and he'd take me into uni [university] in his car, and so, and he also knew that I was doing a little bit of volunteer work, and so then, yeah so it would have been seventy-four [1974], where he then said, I guess there were two things that were not necessarily related but there were two things happening. One of them was that the legislation was changing and that you were allowed to speak a language other than English in Australia broadcast because previous to that you're really only allowed to go *buongiorno* and then good morning, yeah, you were allowed to play music because people like *Angelo*

Dobrilla, he was on five AN [5AN, 891AM, Australian Broadcasting Cooperation [ABC] Adelaide] in the morning, Saturday morning, and he'd play Italian records, but he couldn't speak Italian. The same with *Marissa Baldassi*, I think she was on five KA [5KA commercial radio station transmitting on the AM band, converted to FM band in 1990], but you weren't allowed to speak Italian, but you're allowed to play records. So, they were all doing that in the seventies [1970s], but that legislation was changing in seventy-four [1974]. So that was one thing. Then the second thing that was happening, which Keith Conlon was really excited about, was the legislation really the regulations were changing about community radio, and as a university radio he was really excited about having community radio where people could do that and again that legislation was changing, and so he actually said to me, in the car, it was like well why don't, aren't you involved in some Italian group, why not have he said because these two things are happening. He said why don't you actually have an Italian community radio thing on that on you Five UV [5UV]. And I thought yeah well that's, that sounds good and so I thought there was a couple of things and I that. One was that I went to the Italian Education Movement meeting, and I said this is what they're thinking of doing. What do you think? And that's where I say, and it wasn't an exaggeration, but it's sort of like the people there, particularly *Romano* and Alex, it was sort of like, yeah, they were talking to Don Dunstan [Premier of South Australia] at the time about getting a school of methodology and whatever. It was sort of like, yeah, yeah, if you want to go ahead. And so, for me that was useful, and Sarah Kitto and *Rosa Matto* were also interested. So, we set up a brief for it. Because what you had, it had to have some educational thing because it was university radio and in their constitution, you had to have that. So, there was a group of us who was interested including *Rosanna* [Caporale], blah blah blah. And then the other thing that happened was that a conference was called about community radio which was held at Adelaide Uni [University], and I'm pretty sure it was in about October, would have been October seventy-four [1974] and when there was this meeting about what community radio was all about. So, so we were already sort of getting ready for that, and then there was this conference. Interestingly enough, Alex says that he attended that conference. I don't remember that, but that could possibly be.

01:35:43 GG: According to him he did.

01:35:44 RC: Yeah

01:35:47 GG: As I understand it, and reading also the bibliography from, the biography from *Ilario Nesci*, there were three of you. They were Alex, yourself and himself.

01:36:02 RC: Yeah, I had a lot of time for *Ilario*, but I don't remember them being there.

01:36:05 GG: Yeah, fair enough.

01:36:07 RC: It's, it's fun.

01:36:09 GG: I'm only going by---

01:36:10 RC: No, no, no. What they said and that's what they remember, and Alex has told me that and I think even *Ilario* because, *Ilario* was involved in the radio there. So that was really so that's what we did they, from the perspective of Alex you see. You know, if that's what they remember, that's fine. But I can't adjust in my mind the fact that they were so dismissive and suddenly he's at that meeting.

01:36:37 GG: That's right.

01:36:39 RC: Yeah. You know so that for me is and it's you know like, but never mind the fact is that we had the brief and with *Rosa [Matto]*, as I said with there was *Rosanna*, *Rosa Matto*, me, Sarah Kitto.

01:36:45 GG: *Rosanna*?

01:36:49 RC: *Rosanna Caporale*. Alex, there's, as I said, Sarah Kitto, we brought *Nevis [Zancanaro]* along, et cetera. And remember that a part of in, in a brief it was had to have a, it did have to have an educational perspective. Now remember that from the people that were there, what we were aware of was that there was this dearth of resources. So, what we did, we decided that the, and *Nevis* was when she was teaching at her and she said very few resources available. So, we decided that we would do the regions [regions of Italy] and out of whatever we decided to do *Abruzzo* first because it started with an 'A', but also because *Rosanna* and I, *Abruzzesi* and we knew we had the resources OK, so we did that and then Alex did he then suggested *Luciano Bartaletta*, who was a friend of his, to, because he was into tech stuff and whatever, he could, he could help because at that stage five UV [5UV] was saying we could record off, not in the studio, because that was going to be cheaper. Otherwise, we'd have to pay like twenty dollars a session to do that. Now as it happened, we, like *Rosanna* and I, then did the research for that, and for the *Abruzzesi* programme and we've got other programmes going as well because we had like from *Campania*. So, *Rosa Matto* contacted *Giovanni DiSessa* and so they started on that programme. *Enzo Sodarini* at that stage was also sort of interested. So, he then suggested *Damiani [Gabriele Damiani]* but that wasn't until seventy-five [1975]. Now the fact is that we met with various groups like we met with Professor *Comin* [professor of Italian at Flinders University] and we looked at various ways of doing it and so he was very supportive of us. We had, as I said *Luciano*, he came up with the sigla. We thought because we were doing the regions we thought well let's have some fun with *Paesani*. So, we did, we did that. So really for the rest of seventy-four [1974] we had three or four programmes underway because we had to do the research, because we had to have that educational component. Now the, as it happened, we with the other like the Greek, Polish, I've forgotten what they were now. But there was five other groups that all went on air. Now as it happened, we the Italian radio programme seventy-five, six pm Monday the third of March, we were the first to go on air and we were the first to go on air and the up because the others came up later. It was just a timing issue and we had done work with and it was *Nevis* and *Rosa Matto* who had met with *Angelo Dobrilla*, who was working at was five AN [5AN], he's the one who had radio programmes where

he just put on music, he'd been in Australia a long time and even with *Nevis* writing out the script, he would make errors with pronunciation and whatever he was, lovely man, but a bit thick all round he. So, for, as I said, both *Rosa Matto* and *Rosanna* and *Nevis* met with him, and he was keen to be the presenter. So, he was, for that *Abruzzesi* programme and there is a tape of it somewhere. In fact, there are several tapes because we started making them and then *Luciano* was a real stickler for the sound. And so that's what it was. So, the first programme went on air with *Angelo Dobrilla* is the that first voice that you hear. Then the program is about Abruzzo and the Abruzzi that lived in South Australia and then they had recipes, we had some *Abruzzesi* songs and then we had the segment which we also researched which we called '*Aiuto*' [Help]. So that was the framework for that. Now remember this is all five UV [5UV] and so we continued with that, as I said, with the programmes. As seventy-five [1975] and seventy-six [1976] went on, we did continue with the regional stuff, but we would, it was sort of became so popular that we had the, we had what we're called *richiesta* [request], so people would, would send for requests and we'd go to *Alfa Emporium* [shop in Hindley St Adelaide selling Italian magazines, books and records], which is now more in the middle of Hindley Street than on the corner. And they used to give us records that we could play, but we had to treat them very carefully because they wanted them back. And we destroyed, well, *Enzo Sodarini* destroyed a few of the records. So, *Alfa Emporium* was pissed off. He said I didn't scratch him. I didn't scratch them. And then he had he was wearing a cross and then he got the LP on his cross. So, we had, so, we stuck to the regional stuff because it was supposed to be that, the request was really popular because people would send us money, et cetera. We would talk about club events and whatever, and they would send money. They would actually put money in the envelopes, you know two dollars, twenty dollars whatever. So, it became really popular, and it was and even the, as I said, with the request was really popular and the interview things were really popular. Like we interviewed Don Dunstan, and it was a heady time in in seventy-five [1975]. So, there were lots of things going on and that's where people like or *Massimo* [*Massimo Buonaiuto*] got involved into seventy-five [1975]. *Gabrielle Damiani* got involved in nineteen seventy-five [1975] when he did the programme on *le Marche* [region in central Italy] and he, similar to *Giovanni Di Sessa*, he would sometimes turn up on the Monday night and you know we, and what we got into the habit of doing was recording one week and then, but that was for the program later on, and so that's what they were doing and we started to record in the studio by the way because one of the times Tim Potter [technician for 5UV] for five UV [5UV] wouldn't accept our programme. So, we decided to do it in the studio and that also coincided with doing it in the, recording in the studio, because at that stage it was at the first year was only now. So, recording in the studio was also handy because the original flyers that had gone out about the radio program and showing where it was on the dial had two phone numbers on it, my phone number and *Rosa Matto*, so they were our home phone numbers. So, you had people ringing at all like, for example on the Monday night when you go on air, people then would start ringing, and more often than not we weren't

even then back home, and they were ringing like into midnight and whatever which was sending our parents batty. The people were all very friendly, going '*ho fatto un pianto è venti anni che non sento questa canzone*' [I cried, it has been twenty since I've heard this song] et cetera. So, they were really happy, but it was beginning to be a bit of a thing for our parents. So, by going into the studio on a Monday night, we gave that numbers and said you can ring us there. So, while we were, while we were producing the show, because we had the show for, we would record for about two hours for a one hour programme, but getting ready and blah blah, blah. So, we did that and we did, I think probably ignorance was bliss. We did the most amazing stuff, with that. But as I said to you before, we did all this stuff, but by the time we were into seventy-six [1976], yeah, there was one occasion where *Romano* was really upset because he listened to the programme and somebody, might even have been *Angelo*, had mispronounced something, and so, he said nothing was to go out unless he had checked it. And I said that's not going to happen. I said, this is, I said if you want to come to the studio on a Monday night, we can record, because he said I had to send it to him and then he'd correct it and then the programme and whatever. And I said that is not going to happen. You know, it was like, because meanwhile we had the Greeks where they were making mistakes and whatever, nobody cared. But for us it was like it had to be precise. Many years later when I met *Romano* again in another class, and then, I remember that he then said to me I didn't like you, so why didn't I like you? And I said, is it because I stood up to you at the Italian Education Movement, you said that we had to, you had to, you had to check every single word that was said on Italian radio. And I said that can't happen and an occasional mistake is not the pro and not the problem, people will forgive it, and he laughed, and he said, Oh yeah, that's probably, that's probably.

01:47:01 GG: Right.

01:47:02 RC: So, for me those two-three years were yeah, they were very, they were very interesting in retrospect. You think my God what we did and I think we did it with not realising what we were doing. What became very clear was that it was very much needed and people loved it, and they followed up. But, as I said, I was, I'm conscious of it now in the sense of you know, you I sent you the photo of the article in the I think it was in May seventy-five [1975], me as a university student and we were meeting with, I I've never forgotten, I had the president of the *Sicilia Club* [Sicilia Social and Sport Club Klemzig South Australia], this man came and he came to my house and he just kept saying who else is coming? You know, it's like me. So, here was this man in his fifties, sixties, I've forgotten his name, and it's like he's looking at this young girl and I think I remember that to go like and he, he didn't really say anything at one stage. He just left. He just assumed that the person who was supposed to be there wasn't there, I guess, yeah, that was, in retrospect, yeah, you sort of understand that they just thought this was a bit weird, that we were doing this as much as it was, they loved it. They, it was just amazing. So, about that same time, I mean we did some fantastic stuff for the International Year for Women, about the same time roughly then the, a new

consul came and *Rubens Fedele* [dr. *Rubens Anna Fedele*, Vice-Consul of Italy in South Australia, 1975-1979] was the consul and so we did some, we did an interview with him, did various things with him. So, so there were lots of good things happening but essentially the males, the other really good thing that *Gabriel Damiani* did, which was fantastic, it would have been seventy-five [1975], was that he went to Italy and he went to the RAI [*Radiotelevisione Italiana*, Italian national broadcasting company] and so they started sending the international tapes, and so that was really great. We would, we would do it and I did it as well, and in fact I threw away some of them just a few months ago, some of the tapes that came, and you could go in and edit them tapes and get some really interesting stuff from Italy. And we produced some resources for that for teachers, because remember there was, this was sort of happening sort of parallel. And so, he was just great and probably *Enzo Dobrilla* probably hung around for most of that first year, *Nevis* getting more and more exasperated. But you see the interview with *Gianni Morandi* [popular singer from Italy] was in November and he was still there.

01:50:01 GG: So, what seventy-four, seventy-five [1974, 1975]?

01:50:03 RC: that would be seventy-five [1975] I think. And then in seventy-six [1976] I imagine that's where *Gabrielle* became pretty well full time to do that because I don't know whether *Angelo Dobrilla* was moved or something, I can't remember, but he was, we see we did some stuff with Tim Potter who was at five UV [5UV]. We actually for five UV [5UV], we actually put live stuff on air. What had happened was we were setting up for *Gianni Morandi's* interview and we'd set up in another studio because what we were going to do, he was supposed to get there at about, I don't know, five [5:00 pm] I think. And we were going to interview him and then put it in the last ten minutes of the show. But the plane was late and so he came, he came in really late, and so we went live to air. But with Tim Potter we're going, we tell no one. We didn't even tell Keith Conlon because what we did essentially was interview him as and nobody knew Tim Potter just put it straight on air. You know we could have saved it for the following week. But you know that's what I mean about we were young and fearless and whatever and yeah and we did that and I don't think, Tim Potter was the technician for five UV [5UV]. We actually then gave him an album of *Gianni Morandi* because he got interested in that, and so the wiser heads wanted to take more control of it I guess and---

01:51:35 GG: And let, let's look at that, when did you actually finish with *Radio Paesani*?

01:51:45 RC: Well, I think it was, it was at the end of seventy-six [1976].

01:51:50 GG: Seventy-six [1976] right,

01:51:52 RC: Because what happened was that the, by that stage I was teaching. But *Rubens Fedele* [dr. *Rubens Anna Fedele*, Vice-Console of Italy in South Australia 1975-1979], who, he was a great supporter as was *Tony Comin*, there were a whole heap of people who were great supporters and they and what he did was that he then he got well, he told me that there was a

scholarship for those of Italian background in Italy. So, so he told me to apply, but it was quite obvious that this was a way to get me out of there.

01:52:44 GG: I'm interested in that.

01:52:56 RC: I think he'd probably had an earful from the various men to say that I needed to be---

01:53:01 GG: Actually, I'm interested,

01:53:03 RC: Yeah.

01:53:04 GG: Because, I mean, I'll come out in history with the radio and I can tell you some stories also, but I'm interested in this with the fact that you were a young girl dealing with this, all these men. Linguistically, I'm interested because there were these people, the people that said there is a proper Italian and any deviation is to be condemned, and people that took over later were of that thinking. So yeah, just explore this.

01:53:29 RC: Well, my philosophical approach was and I did speak Italian, although I had been brought up speaking as I said both dialect and Italian. And one of the things that my father got really upset about, because my father was the president of the *Casa Da Abruzzo* at that stage, and we were at a function and remember that *Romano* and Alex were lobbying him to try to get money for the Chair of Italian at SACAE [Adelaide College of Advanced Education] and so we were there and the Premier, Don Dunstan, was there and in front of me to like and my father to the Premier, *Alessandro* says we need that money for the Chair because we have stupid people like *Rosetta* here who can't speak Italian. I can't remember his exact words, but it was words to that effect. That, that's why we need to have the school of Italian, because she needs to learn to speak Italian.

01:54:24 GG: Not, that Alex could speak Italian.

01:54:26 RC: And so, going home my father was so cross at Alex that, that it was just like how dare, how dare you say that about anyone let alone my daughter. How dare you put a person down because they haven't had the opportunity to study Italian and whatever. And he my father told Alex this in the end and it was like yeah I mean that was that mentality and I think *Rubens Fedele*, I think understood that and he yeah. So, he was more agreed with us. It was like *Nevis* was already teaching Italian, but it was like the, we were happy to talk to, it was like talking was more important than getting it exactly precise. And that was my philosophy, and I think *Rubens Fedele* supported that, *Tony Comin* supported that, many of the others supported that. If this was bringing, joy to the older people. But, as I said in my article, we were really keen to provide support for those of the second generation who should be proud of being able to speak Italian not the old story of honour. I don't know, I don't speak dialect and to be embarrassed about that or ashamed we, it was just, we just figured that if people spoke more than it you could improve you could, you could correct them properly sensitively and they could improve. And that, the idea of you don't open your mouth unless you've got it the classical Italian and the, and that, and what I remember was that the, I

chose to go to Rome University. I mean, I was born under a lucky star. I went to *La Sapienza* [*La Sapienza* University of Rome]. Have to add, like you, I went to *La Sapienza*. You know, think about it now. Wonderful. Anyway, and I've still got my stuff anyway, but I went to *La Sapienza* and international students were required to, to fill in particular forms and also to do a language test. But I did these various things. I had the interviews about what I was going to do and there were three or four tutors and whatever there. And so, then I said, 'when do I have to do the language test?' These professors at *La Sapienza* said '*ma perchè, parli bene*' [but why, you speak well] and I thought, where's *Romano*? Where's *Alex*? When these professors at the, at *La Sapienza* said that, that my Italian was fine, but it also made me think of that like I was already comfortable in myself. But we'd seen so many younger, like adults who had really been, I guess, bullied really about who they were and their ability to speak, you know, speaking. I know that *Tony Mercuri* used to call *Alex* 'Judge Din', He didn't like it, but yeah, the exuberance of youth. But sort of it was, it was a privilege, and I got a lot out of it, in the sense of, as I said, I then went to Italy, studied, studied in Italy for a couple of, couple of years, learnt so much, et cetera. So it was, yeah. So, I don't know it maybe, it needed to be done maybe that the, the people taking over, the mature, older mainly men, but the women came as well. There was *Claudia*, et cetera, *Vinny Ciccarello*, they came I think by seventy-seven [1977], I think they'd come on board, which was, that was great. I just wish though that, because I know that it continued, that concept of we can't have you on, like you'd have whatever doctors, lawyers, whatever of Italian background you go no, no, you can't come on Italian radio because you can't speak Italian. That seemed to me so short sighted and so.

01:58:36 GG: And that was *Di Sessa*.

01:58:38 RC: Yeah. And if I would have done anything, if I could have changed anything, that's I think Italian radio missed out because of that mentality. I really do. The other thing I do need to say, I'd like to say rather, is that with *Giovanni Di Sessa* back, trying to remember, when he contacted me because, he was a, he was a teacher in the system. He and *Rosanna* taught together for a while. Anyway, he wanted to know, he said he wanted to do the history. OK, so it's one of my little regrets because it was a long, it was a long time ago, but I met with him. But before I met with him, I went back into the archives at Radio five UV [5UV] and because, I remember it was, University Radio and I think they had already shifted. But at the Barr Smith [Library] in the archives, I then went and I got the original flyer, the original what, the original notes, all in my handwriting, the flyer, various things there. I got those and I gave them to him because it was in the days where photocopying was tricky. So, I gave him these primary resources and I never saw them again. And then there was the waterlog in the Barr Smith Library [library at the University of Adelaide] and he then wrote a history which was, like all sort of lie, lies. They have some element of truth, he said. A group of students started off *Radio Paesani*. And then we took over.

02:00:21 GG: took over.

02:00:23 RC: That's it. And it didn't count that it was like nearly---

02:00:26 GG: Three years. There's another chapter in between you and what happened after, and that's the chapter I'm writing because I was the one involved in that one.

02:00:35 RC: So, so that was sad. So, for me, as I said, it was, it was really, it was great at the time. It was heady because we went on air before any of the eastern states.

02:01:20 GG: You start off one hour. Did it go---?

02:01:24 RC: Yeah. Then, then it moved to two or three hours in the next year, right. For me it was like, yeah, about a three-year journey on.

02:01:36 GG: The other thing I'm interested in is the involvement to start off EBI ethnic broadcast Incorporated.

02:01:42 RC: Yeah, yeah. So that, that really coincided. That would have been, that would have been seventy-five [1975] and, as I said, we'd gone on air. I could have been seventy-four [1974], I can't remember. But seventy-four, seventy-five [1974, 1975] we, there was the group, as I said, there was the Italian group, there was the Greek, Polish, Dutch. So, there were six groups in all and then they called a meeting and they, so they called a meeting and I went along, again I was really the youngest there because they were, there were a couple of women and I think it was the Polish one, but they were all, look, they might have only been forty, but you I was in my early whatever twenties so they were all of a certain age. Paul from the Dutch was sort of there, et cetera, so they decided to form a constitution. The others were the Serbo-Croatians they were there, and so we had this meeting and set up EBI [Ethnic Broadcasters Incorporated]. So, in the minutes of the first EBI meeting, I was there, and when we looked at the constitution, whatever, I went to several meetings and the so that was fine. But then what I did was that because they pretty quickly moved into wanting to get funding for a studio, because for a lot of the groups paying for time at five UV [5UV] was, it was more money than they had. So, they wanted to apply and so I then after I don't know a dozen meetings if they're probably less than *Luciano* went along because they did the technical stuff. So, by, I think by seventy-seven [1977] they, they'd got funding, and *Luciano* was part of setting up the studio and whatever.

02:02:49 GG: So, when did you move out of five UV [5UV]?

02:01:52RC: The, I think, I think it was seventy. It was away, so I think it was probably seventy-seven [1977].

02:03:31 GG: Right. So, it was after you left?

02:03:33 RC: Yeah. After I left.

00:46:38 GG: I know that by seventy-eight [1978] that were already broadcasting from Thebarton.

02:03:42 RC: Yeah. So that's so I, for me, I just. I continued at---

02:03:46 GG: So, seventy-seven [1977] was still like five UV [5UV]?

02:03:50 RC: Yeah, I think so, or sometime in seventy-seven [1977]? Yeah, because seventy-seven [1977]. I was in Italy.

02:03:56 GG: Ah seventy-six [1976], sorry, seventy-six [1976].

02:04:01 RC: it's definitely seventy-six [1976]. I was in Italy, well I went to at the end of the year, but until then that was all there. So, seventy-six [1976] was also the Italian Festival. So again, was the First Italian Festival Australia wide. So I was involved with all of that, but, as I said, *Rubens Fedele*, then he encouraged me to apply for the scholarship and yeah so then I and, it was already a little bit late so I got, I got to the university late for that, but it didn't matter because that was, again, there was all sorts of things happening in Italy at the time so that when I was, when I went to uni there so.

02:04:49 GG: Okay. Well, unfortunately we got to call it quit. There were other things I like to continue on after you left there but thank you very much for all the information you gave me. It is it filled in the gaps and set the foundations of what has happened because unfortunately urban myths do grow.

02:05:22RC: Yeah.

02:02:23 GG: I mean is it almost 50 years.

02:05:25 RC: Well, that's right. And I've always been conscious of that. If I can say that. I always saw myself as, myself as the catalyst and then there were other people involved. What I'm very conscious of is something I think I said at the beginning, and I want to emphasize that for me it was a, I'll call it a three-year experience because of the time leading in and then the programme, et cetera. And when I got back from, when I got back from Italy over those years, I did occasionally, was called in to do interviews, et cetera. Occasionally people, would remember that I was the producer of the first Italian radio program. And, as I said, I think, I think I got, I'll call it appreciation and whatever for that, which I'm very appreciative of. But I'm very, I'm very aware that, I'd like the story to be told accurately and sensitively because there were lots of other people including, as I said, including people like *Rosa Matto* and *Rosanna*. They, the work that they did for example in the flyers, distributing the flyers et cetera. The work, the research work that went into the different programmes, the setting up, a lot of work and hours was done. But I also accept that for those, the ones that I was involved with particularly, it was in that sense a short time. I'm very conscious of, for example, *Vinny Ciccarello* I don't know exactly when she started, but it was probably seventy-seven.

02:07:05 GG: Nineteen-eighty [1980] odd because she was in Italy.

02:07:12 RC: She was in Italy as well.

02:07:14 GG: And she came in back in nineteen-eighty [1980] and walked into my CIC [Coordinating Italian Committee] office and said, what can I do?

02:07:22 RC: OK, great. Well, my point being that by the time things were like the time it passed, it was like *Vinny* had been on Italian radio for twenty years. So, I don't want to undermine the work, the time that you spent, and *Vinny* spent or *Giovanni Disessa* spent. I think that's all very, that is all very important that people did for many years provide that volunteer service mainly. But the story about the catalyst and the people who were there, that needs to be told as well. *Enzo Dobrilla* was he; we can't ignore him as one of the instigators. He was the one who had an Italian radio program on air for a couple of years, wasn't allowed to speak Italian, probably good.

02:08:06 GG: Is he still alive?

02:08:20 RC: Yeah, last I heard he was, he'd gone to Queensland. So, it's like, it's like I want to give full kudos to *Gabriele [Damiani]*. I think he was there for a very long time, did an incredible amount of work, was fantastic and in those early days of getting the tapes, fantastic. But I feel that the recognition of the work that, as I said, the people like that *Enzo [Dobrilla]* did, that *Nevis [Zancanaro]* did that, that others did, I think that should also be recognised, and not just me. I think the fact that I was the catalyst is important, but I then got other people to participate.

02:09:06 GG: Well, I keep saying we are cogs in a wheel that has spun over fifty years.

02:09:16 RC: Yeah.

02:09:18 GG: And importance that to be given to each cog rather than---

02:08:53 RC: Well, that's right. Because it's like what I think I've put in a different article, is the issue about saying those first few steps might have been small steps, but without them the journey couldn't have proceeded. So that's really important.

02:09:05 GG: Right. Are you still in touch with *Nevis* or---

02:09:07 RC: *Nevis* and *Tony [Mercurio]* have moved to Victoria. So, so we contacted them because, that's the other thing I was going to say quite a bit of this in writing has happened over the years. So I was, I think I don't know, the twentieth anniversary and I don't know the thirtieth or the fortieth. I sent you the article that was on *Australia Donna*, but the others are written in English so there are publications. So *Mirela Mancini* would have them. So, *Mirella* and like at one time it was also *Ornella*. *Vinny* didn't seem to have the past stories, but she was involved. But *Ornella Luin* and *Mirella* in particulars had those. So, they, again the resources that are there because over the years, over the years it's been up and down in the recognition. It's like, back, I think in a long time ago, twenty-five, when they celebrated the twenty-five years there was an event to celebrate twenty-five years of Italian Radio and Roger [Roger Lean, Rosa's Husband, also Manager of the Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission] was invited in his role at Multicultural SA and I went along as the companion, it's just his plus one, now when we got there and I was on the VIP table et cetera, when we got there people like *Claudia* and others sort of went what the, it was like what we've got the person who started and

they didn't even have, I mean *Claudia* was quite funny she was saying they didn't even have a badge for me. So, once you got a badge.

02:10:53 GG: I can tell you a few stories about that event.

02:10:56 RC: It was so funny because, and I'm going 'look it's alright, it's alright', but it was, it was just sort of so funny and so then they had. I forgotten who it was that was following up, might have been *Mirella* said you've got to have a badge, you've got to have a badge, look it's alright and then we, they did an interview et cetera and stuff and it was, it was also amusing because at the table, at the VIP table' there was also *Tony Cocchiaro*, the two, husband and wife, and then *Toni* female says to me, because *professore Giovanni Di Sessa*, this is *Dottore* such and such, and then for us it's like *la seniore* [madam].

02:12:13 GG: There was no title.

02:12:14 RC: Yeah. And so, it was like the, I remember, yeah, *Claudia* sort of saying what should [it be]. And I said, well, in Italian, it's *dottoressa* [female doctor, anyone who had a post graduate degree]. I've got several postgraduate degrees, and she's going, and she's going, I'm going to go and tell *professore Di Sessa* that he's going to call you *dottoressa*.

02:12:36 GG: That's has always been a problem about titles.

02:12:40 RC: Yeah, that's right. Well, they, it was titles for them so then Tony the male, he then, he was quite conscious then, so we, so he'd called his wife *professoressa* [female professor], and he called me *dottoressa*. It was like, yeah, so it was just amusing. Anyway, I should.

02:12:56 GG: Yep. Well, thank you very much, *Rosa*.

Interview with Lino Cardone

Recorded by Giuseppe Geracitano on the 8th of November 2023.

At 9 Gladstone Street, Fullarton, South Australia 5063

**Category: Italian Community Organisations in South Australia:
The Establishment of Italian Community Radio, *Radio
Paesani*, in 1975**



00:00:03 GG: Recording for the Italian Historical Society of South Australia Incorporated for the project “*A Trunk Full of Dream, A Suitcase Full of Memories; Stories of Italian Immigrants in South Australia*”, Category: Italian Community Organizations in South Australia; the Establishment of Italian Community Radio, *Radio Paesani*, in nineteen seventy-five [1975], on Wednesday the eighth [8th] of November two-thousand-and-twenty-three [2023]. Interviewer: *Giuseppe (Joe) Geracitano*, President of the Society; interviewee: *Lino Cardone*, the then technician, at number nine [9], Gladstone, St Fullarton, South Australia, five-thousand-and-sixty-three [5063].

00:00:57 GG: Good morning, *Lino*.

00:01:00 LC: And good Morning, Joe.

00:01:01 GG: For the record, could I have full name?

00:01:04 LC: Yep. *Lino Cardone*, nine Gladstone Street, Fullarton and age of seventy.

00:01:13 GG: Very good. You have more information than I asked. Could also ask you where were you born?

00:01:20 LC: I was born in *Pietrelcina*, Provincia Benevento, Campania Italia,

00:01:26 GG: And when were you born?

00:01:31 LC: *Millenovecentocinquantatree, il ventiquattro gennaio cinquantatre*. [Nineteen fifty-three, the twenty fourth January fifty-three, 1953, 24th January 53]

00:01:34 GG: And when did immigrate to Australia?

00:01:36 LC: Well, it started off, December at fifty-nine and we got here in January sixty, nineteen sixty [1960].

00:01:51 GG: So, you were nine years old.

00:01:52 LC: Eight, nine years old.

00:02:01 GG: And tell me, how did you get involved in *Radio Paesani*?

00:02:07 LC: I was a student, an engineering student at, at that time, the Institute of Technology at North Terrace. And I got a job there as an engineering, sorry, laboratory technician in the language laboratory, which was maintaining the tape recorders for those migrants that were learning English, conversational English, in the School of General Studies in the Playford building, which is about the third building back from North Terrace. And I was part of that job entailed looking after the audio-visual equipment from the drama room and drama department. And there was recording capability. There was a person that worked at Institute of Technology called Alex, *Alessandro Gardini*, and he approached me and said, will you be able to do some audio recording for *Radio Paesani*? And we've got introduced and I did have the recording equipment for duplicating tapes and doing that sort of stuff. And, I got introduced to it, so rather than they recording it with their five UV [5UV] we did it at the Institute of Technology. Now the very first one, I think it was the third or fourth programme is where I started. Because the other ones were done elsewhere. What occurred is that we used the drama room, which was very nice or acoustically set up, a big area and put the tape recorder. There was two channel-recorder, but the programme was only in mono being transmitted and that presented problems later in interesting times. But the people there, *Damiani*, *Gabriel Damiani* and a few other people there, and we used to record on the reel to reel on a Thursday night for a programme that was transmitted on a Sunday afternoon at three o'clock [3:00pm]. So, I had to deliver the tapes, sorry, we recorded Wednesday night cause the tapes had to be at Five UV [5UV] on the Thursday, Thursday lunchtime, something like that, so they had enough time to prepare. The recording was done using microphones and a single record player and literally a record player. People brought their own records and a programme used to take, I remember the first one took about four or five hours because people would want to, yeah, correct the mistake they made, something didn't quite sound right, the music didn't quite come in right, etcetera. So, it takes about four hours. We managed to get it down to about two, two and half after a while and it was a very set programme. So, what used to happen? We'd sit around the table and do the recording, put in the music, and there'd be *rubrica* [weekly review], of course the programme had to last exactly fifty, sorry, sixty minutes, so it was thirty seconds, thirty seconds of sigla of the theme coming in and thirty seconds at the tail end. And that was divided up into two tapes which clearly identified and dropped off into a box set five UV [5UV]. This went on for about three to four years until I left the Institute of Technology and joined Mitsubishi, but it was just before that, because I went

overseas in seventy-nine, eighty [1979, 1980] I handed it over to *Di Sessa* [*Giovanni Di Sessa*] and his son was then took over being the technician

00:06:18 GG: That was *Giovanni Di Sessa*?

00:06:23 LC: *Giovanni, Giovanni Di Sessa*. He took over the recordings, etcetera, and I went overseas for four months. But when I came back I, because I changed jobs, so I didn't continue it on. And then the family was coming along as well. So that distracted me for a while. The recordings, as I said, we only did one hour per week. And we're very fortunate people used to listen to it at three o'clock in the afternoon and in anticipation it was under frequency 531 kHz. Which requires long antenna, so it wasn't the best end of the band to be on, but at least we had the band and we could transmit. A lot of clubs used to come along and to announce what they were doing and, not the publicity like we have now, but just discussing, discussing what they were going to be doing, any dinner dances coming up, but not as a quick grab but as a longer. It was an interview, the proper interviews, and that really kicked off a few clubs, you know, really helped them out. One of them was, my dad was involved with *Associazione Nazionale Marinai D'Italia* [Italian Naval Association], and they did the first interview, an announcement, finished off dinner dance was announced that way and had quite a lot of people following. You got to bear in mind that at that time, there was only one. Italian programme one hour, one per week and that's it. So, people were glued to the to the radio. They really knew it.

00:08:17 GG: But can I stop you there? You say it was transmitter on a Sunday?

00:08:21 LC: Afternoon, three o'clock

00:08:24 GG: Wasn't originally the programme on Monday night?

00:08:28 LC: No, not that I remember, but this would have been from a roughly the fourth. I think it was, I didn't get told how many had been transmitted before me, but I found out recently that it was about the number four. No, there was a Sunday afternoon three o'clock the reason I know that is because I used to listen to it and, as I said before, we used to take about up the full, a full five hours to record one programme of one hour, less than an hour. But one time we got to the end, and we had to leave the Institute [of Technology], It was midnight. It would start in the evening, by the way, about seven o'clock, seven or eight in the evening recording and we didn't have time, for some reason, so I actually got the tape, I've got a second tape and I said yes, OK, I'll go back and take out the fifteen seconds, etcetera, well, I did that, however I over recorded what we've done, when it got transmitted ten minutes from the end, came out two voices with a slight different accent, the whole programme was a bit of confusion, and I still remember having to ring up five UV [5UV] saying please take it off the air. And that was, that was the only time it happened. That's why, because we were recording in stereo but being transmitted in mono and we're now overdubbed, I only did one channel, not both, so I got called out. The people there, *Mrs De Biasi, Arboit, Ubaldi*.

00:10:09 GG: *Sergio Ubaldi?*

00:10:11 LC: *Sergio Ubaldi*

00:10:13 GG: And *Viviana Arboit?*

00:10:14 LC: *Viviana Arboit* and *Mrs Di Biasi, De Blasio?* No, *De Blasio. De Biasi*. Always remember, no, I think it's *De Biasi*. Could be, could be *Di Blasio*. But anyway. A very nice lady kept seeing her again in the *Toscana Club*. She used to be there. What equipment did we use? Basic reel to reel tape recorder that I used for the language laboratory, microphones, fairly standard microphone desk type, so it was very. very basic stuff, but hey, it produced a programme that was very much listened to.

00:10:52 GG: Was there any reason? What was the reason that the programme was prerecorded and not live?

00:11:00 LC: That was Five UV [5UV] requirement. A few times they did lose our tape or they stuffed up, I don't know how they did it because you put it into a sealed box at the actual studio, which was nearby at the University of Adelaide, and we had to go in, one time, OK. about two, three times we had to go in and recorded live or actually transmit live. One time we did it in the Sunday afternoon, another time I remember was in the morning between seven and eight in the morning, but that was near the end when they gave us more hours. But it was a requirement, Five UV [5UV] wanted it. That way. So, I don't know if it was for keeping a record of the programme or, because they'd give me back my tapes and I'd just wipe them and start again. I had two sets of type, one that was being about to be transmitted and one that was to be recorded over, so I'd recycled the tapes over and over again. We also included at times tapes from *RAI* [*Radiotelevisione Italiana*, Italian national radio and television broadcaster] from Italy that they used to mail out to us and we use the programmes offered them, but once we've used all the material, then I'd use the tapes again for recording.

00:12:21 GG: So that's very unlikely that any of those tapes have survived.

00:12:26 LC: Some of them did, I did have two, but they have been misplaced, but I'm going to see if I can find them, the two I think, I had three or four of them, but two of being misplaced. But the other two I think, I think I can find. They're very distinctive tapes. they're a green colour they stood out. I don't know who got them because after I had collected about six or eight of them that I used to cycle through, I got no use for them. And one of the things that was very encouraging that we did and really got involved with was the Italian Carnevale or Festival in seventy-six. [the First National Italian Festival 1976].

00:13:07 GG: Right. Tell me about it.

00:13:11 LC: They did a lot of promoting on the on the radio. I still remember the guests coming in and discussing it and where it was gonna be and what was gonna happen. And then we did discuss it afterwards as well. But that was one of the big promotions and I think the radio had a big, big effect. I mean there was, there was a network amongst the Italians about what was coming up in

events, but the radio congealed a lot of that, discussion that was happening between clubs and things like that.

00:13:49 GG: And all the people involved, including yourself, were they paid people or volunteers?

00:13:58 LC: No, no, totally, totally volunteers. Every one of us. We had an interest in promoting the Italian language, the Italian culture and what was happening and that we could reach out to a lot of people that couldn't attend clubs. There was, you know, in the homes and things like that. At that time, it was word of mouth and telephone that was the main communications and *Il Globo*, *La Fiamma* [Italian language newspapers printed in Australia] who was the other ones, and the radio is really something that we didn't have at the time and that came up and it. Yeah, people were, hey, it was communications. You got to know about other places, other events within the this, within Adelaide and that's of course what was happening in Italy, but not as current news, it was more, and this is what they've done there or this is what they're doing. So, it was more of a reporting of the better week to two weeks behind because of the types

00:14:56 GG: Of course, in those days, so there were no computers so like we have today.

00:15:00 LC: No, no, there wasn't, there was no, what? That time was bulletin boards they hadn't come in as yet; they came in at the end. But these were from your original question. These were all volunteers. And the genuine interest to promote et cetera. There was one little thing they didn't want me to play a complete song through because people may record it and then they won't listen to the radio again. And that carried through for quite a few years. But as you know now it doesn't matter because you go to YouTube or on the net [internet] or whatever and you can download the whole song anyway. But at that time, just before we got to the end, you'd put in a spoiler. Well, when I say spoiler, they'd start talking before the end of the song. They would that talk, they announce, the song started and then talk. Yeah, there was several people, they used to do it and then start talking. Yeah, this is the song in the background, and of course, if you hit the record on your cassette player, you've got this person talking. And I used to get a few complaints that way. You know, why can't they just put the song on and keep quiet? Well, that's what, that's what they wanted to do. It wasn't my job, my control, but it was interesting

00:15:22 GG: Right, *Radio Paesani* was sponsored or was it an offshoot of another organisation. What was that organisation?

00:16:34 LC: I don't know as much. No, I don't know. The reason is I was pulled in as a technician and participated and I was very pleased and honoured to be able to, to help out with the Italian community et cetera, because of promotion. But I don't know where it came from. So, Alex, *Alessandro Gardini*, *Alex Gardini* was the person who approached me. You know, helped me out and asked, et cetera, but I found him very, very good. He, he did the sort of in the background, he did all these things. He got things going, but he never participated on the radio. I think maybe once. But he was very shy of it. He

did not, he didn't see that his role, his role was to facilitate it, to make it happen, to clear the way do things. But he wasn't the front person. He didn't want to be the front person is what I've got as an impression.

00:17:32 GG: Right. How could you gauge the response from the community?

00:17:38 LC: The places I'd go to, they've come up and say, well, I heard you on the radio, you know, and this and that and who's coming on and who's that? So, they questioned about who's on the programme, essentially *Ubaldi* and *Vivien Arboit* they used to approach some clubs. We did one recording, no live transmissions in those days. We did recording down at the *Veneto Club* they had a New Zealand or Pacific Island, and they had a pig in the ground, *hangi*, I'll never get it right outside and we did the recordings there with them, so we did do a few and we put that on the air. Yeah, but the approach it, it's just the clubs and people would say know how do I get to say something on the radio or you know do you know this is happening events and then we'd announce social events coming up. It started off with three or four people want and three or four I'm saying three, four, the numbers could be more, that they said look would announce start from Italy, yeah, I'd like to do with information from Italy what's happening. Others would say, oh, we think you should have a *rubrica* for *le donne* [a segment for the ladies]. I remember that one, that was, *Mrs di Biasio* or *di Blasio* and she would announce and talk about the woman's health and there were others that, it was, it was just the music background and a few jokes and that the programme slowly, the structure, it was presented initially, you know, what's the structure going to be? Well, we have a bit of this and a bit of that. But at the end of my about four years, four and half years, the structure was starting to harden up in that, yeah, this is what we do at the beginning, et cetera. So, you could anticipate when a particular segment would be on rather than was somewhere in the one hour. And it was good, Yeah, I mean that, that it evolved quite well, involved quite well. Because we were all new at it.

00:19:58 GG: You mentioned that a couple of people that were involved. Can you remember anybody else, who was the driving force, for example---

00:20:08 LC: The key, the main announcer was, I just did his name a bit earlier, *Gabriele*, *Gabrielle Damiani*. Yeah, he was the voice, beautiful voice and still is, and *Sergio Ubaldi* was the driver, if he had to say now who's actually lead in the programmes and things, he was, he was the one that was driving. *Mrs Di Biasi* was in the background, but *Vivienne [Arboit]* was the other.

00:20:47 GG: Was this at the Beginning, near the beginning?

00:20:49 LC: At the beginning. Near the beginning. Near the beginning. You see I left in seventy-nine [1979] to go overseas. So yeah, at the beginning that he was the talk and main proposer, et cetera, so in effect, became the leader. Now I'm not sure if he was elected leader otherwise, but it was a very good approach. He wasn't demanding or dictatorial, far from it. It was a case of we should do it this way and that, and you know, it was. it was a very good, balanced community, was a good family and then of course we got extra hours. I heard like when I came back I really and I joined EBI [Ethnic Broadcasters

Incorporated] and they had to think one hour a week, sorry, not an hour a week, an hour a day. And that's why I again came back as a technician and doing transmissions et cetera. But then, as I say, the family came along and sort of left it and the character of the radio station had changed as well.

00:21:55 GG: In what way?

00:21:57 LC: With a lot more people, there's very, very dominant personalities to promote it and, it is just changed. That it is changed in a different way, in a different direction.

00:22:15 GG: Can you name some of these dominant people?

00:22:19 LC: Well, there was *Di Sessa*, and he had a considerable influence on the radio and there's a lot of Neapolitan going on and that that's OK, but I always considered the *Radio Italiana* was *Italiana Paesani*, it was for the whole community, and the others and, you know, it's just the family coming along, et cetera. And did do what we want to do one programme which didn't take off at the time because we didn't have the hours, which was to do a programme in English on Italian radio, but with Italian talking about Italian for the children of the migrants, like I was myself, who had not studied in Italy but spoke some Italian and wanted to know about the culture et cetera, you know, there was no other place to get it from. And so my idea was to use the English because that's the main language, but to learn about Italian, throw in Italian words and things like that, however, because as was pointed out to me, look, we only have one hour and then whatever was five, six, seven hours, the people are expecting Italian, so it's got to be all in Italian and that's what happened. But I've noticed Interstate they've done that and they're doing some of it here now.

00:23:41 GG: When *radio Paesani* moved from Five UV [5UV] to EBI, was the programme still prerecorded or was it live?

00:23:53 LC: Don't know. When I got back, it was live.

00:23:58 GG: And that was in nineteen seventy-nine [1979].

00:23:39 LC: No eighty [1980] because I came back in eighty

00:24:05 GG: Nineteen-eighty [1980].

00:24:07 LC: Yeah, eighty [1980], et cetera. I got in, I didn't join straight away, but yeah, somewhere there. And that used to be live. Because I still remember having to lift up the discs and drop them at go back half a turn and drop them at the right time. Yeah, the prerecording stopped

00:24:25 GG: And is there anything else you want to add?

00:24:29 LC: No, I am. Look, there's the front faces of the radio, which was *Ubaldo*, *Sergio* and *Vivienne* [*Arboit*], *Mrs De Biase* and of course, *Gabriele*. *Gabriele* was the face people recognise because that was the voice. The others that used to come in every so often, I don't remember their names to be honest, it was a big room, but this, as I say, there is the front people and then there's the people in the background that made things happen. And such as *Alex*

Gardini, and I guess there must have been others. At Five UV [5UV] there was Conlon.

00:24:20 GG: Keith Conlon?

00:24:21 LC: Keith Conlon. He was good there. The technicians I dealt with the Five UV [5UV], they were also good and supportive. It was down in the basement of the university was in a sort of a, a well this radio station. But they, they helped along, they had their requirements, and they were very strict about it, but they did a good job for us and yeah, grateful that the programme got kicked off and look where we are now, twenty-four seven.

00:25:53 GG: How you felt about being involved?

00:25:57 LC: Look, I loved it. It was a great, fantastic experience. It exposed me to a lot of the people in the community, which some, they only met them there by name, et cetera. I didn't know what their businesses were. Europa Print was being, was always supporting us at that time, and some of the others, they came in, very nice people and made them, but only realised much later in later years, what their actual roles and what they were in the community and such strong pillars and supporting pillars of the Italian community, and I realised that later. So, I think *Maglieri* was there, sometime, and *Giovanni*. This is not *Giovann Di Sessa*, they came up later.

00:27:06 GG: Thank you very much Lino for the interview.

00:27:08 LC: Yeah, let's just say it did kick off a few clubs, and the Italian Festival was very much promoted over the radio and yeah, and look what it's developed into. And it's look, it's fantastic because at that time we couldn't, didn't have many proper Italian speakers because the migration had stopped eighteen years beforehand or fifteen years beforehand, and the new wave hadn't come through. So, it was a little bit hard, but now it it's, you know, you got a wave new people and it's fantastic. Thank you, Joe, for the recording.

00:27:46 GG: Thank you.

